

SAC Small Groups Discussion Guide – Oct. 19th, 2025

This guide comes with the expectation that even if someone has missed the Sunday service, they have watched the sermon before coming to their small group.

Fellowship Time

Make sure to have time where people can chat and catch up. This section could include a dinner together, having a potluck, preparing snacks, etc. The key to this section is make people feel welcomed and seen.

Read the Scripture & Overview Aloud Together

This section contains the text and a brief summary of the sermon that was preached on Sunday. It will have the main point explained as a way to help those remember the sermon. This is not an in-depth overview because the expectation is that everyone will take the time to listen to the sermon. Make sure to read this aloud for everyone to hear.

Text

John 11:1-44 – 1 Now a certain man was sick: Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. 2 And it was the Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. 3 So the sisters sent word to Him, saying, “Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick.” 4 But when Jesus heard this, He said, “This sickness is not meant for death, but is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by it.” 5 (Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister, and Lazarus.) 6 So when He heard that he was sick, He then stayed two days longer in the place where He was. 7 Then after this He said to the disciples, “Let’s go to Judea again.” 8 The disciples said to Him, “Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone You, and yet You are going there again?” 9 Jesus replied, “Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks during the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. 10 But if anyone walks during the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.” 11 This He said, and after this He said to them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going so that I may awaken him from sleep.” 12 The disciples then said to Him, “Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will come out of it.” 13 Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about actual sleep. 14 So Jesus then said to them plainly, “Lazarus died, 15 and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, so that you may believe; but let’s go to him.” 16 Therefore Thomas, who was called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples, “Let’s also go, so 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 fifteen stadia away; 19 and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary, to console them about their brother. 20 So then Martha, when she heard that Jesus was coming, went to meet Him, but Mary stayed in the house. 21 Martha then said to Jesus, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. 22 Even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You.” 23 Jesus *said to her, “Your brother will rise from the dead.” 24 Martha *said to Him, “I know that he will rise in the resurrection on the last day.”*

25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; the one who believes in Me will live, even if he dies, 26 and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?" 27 She said to Him, "Yes, Lord; I have come to believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, and He who comes into the world." 28 When she had said this, she left and called Mary her sister, saying secretly, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you." 29 And when she heard this, she got up quickly and came to Him.

30 Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still at the place where Martha met Him. 31 Then the Jews who were with her in the house and were consoling her, when they saw that Mary had gotten up quickly and left, they followed her, thinking that she was going to the tomb to weep there. 32 So when Mary came to the place where Jesus was, she saw Him and fell 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 also weeping, He was deeply moved in 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 So the Jews were saying, "See how He loved him!" 37 But some of them said, "Could this Man, who opened the eyes of the man who was blind, not have also kept this man from dying?"

38 So Jesus, again being deeply moved within, came to the tomb. Now it was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. 39 Jesus said, "Remove the stone." Martha, the sister of the deceased, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there will be a stench, for he has been dead four days." 40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?" 41 So they removed the stone. And Jesus raised His eyes, and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. 42 But I knew that You always hear Me; nevertheless, because of the people standing around I said it, so that they may believe that You sent Me." 43 And when He had said these things, He cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" 44 Out came the man who had died, bound hand and foot with wrappings, and his face was wrapped around with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

Overview of Sermon

This week Pastor Mike led us back into our series in the Gospel of John. In this story, we learn that Lazarus falls ill and eventually dies from his sickness. All of us in this world experience the sickness and brokenness that comes from sin and this story is defined by sickness and death having the first word. Jesus journeys with his disciples, much to their unease, to Bethany to visit Lazarus' family. Martha visits Jesus first and claims that if Jesus had been present, then Lazarus would have been healed. This act demonstrates the faith in Jesus she had, albeit to a point. Jesus then declares himself to be the resurrection and the life, pointing out to all that He has the authoritative word over sickness. Martha affirms the hope that Jesus offers.

Martha then runs to find Mary and bring her to Jesus. Mary has the exact response that her sister had, "If you had been here, my brother would not have died". Even though Jesus knows the end result, He was moved by her response, went to the tomb, and there wept. Jesus' display of empathy demonstrates the depth of His love for other people. The Jewish crowd is divided between belief and unbelief in who Jesus is and in response Jesus asks them to open the tomb

even though Lazarus has been dead for four days (in order for everyone to know Jesus can raise the dead). This is the turning point in the Gospel of John when Jesus commands Lazarus to come out from the tomb with his life back. This miracle is a clear foreshadow to what Jesus will accomplish.

Jesus had the unique ability to both be present with others in their midst of their despair and brokenness while finding the precise time to bring about His healing work. It is God's to decide how He will work in and through any experience. Our responsibility is to share the journey as people walk through the darkness and face the valleys. Sickness may have the first word, but Jesus has the ultimate and final word to live a life that is full and flourishing.

Discussion Questions

These questions are prompts to help the group have meaningful dialogue over the sermon this past weekend. Do not feel the need to ask all these questions. You are more than welcome to create your own questions or mix the questions together.

Connection to Other (Icebreaker/Light)

- What does the perfect weekend look like for you?

Connection to Head (Study/Knowledge Questions)

- What does this passage teach us about God? (Feel free to list what you learned along with the verse associated with it).
- Look up the seven I AM statements of Jesus. How do they inform our understanding of Jesus? (John 6:35; 8:12; 10:7; 10:11; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1).

Connection to Heart (Deeper Engagement)

- How have you walked the tension of the capability of Jesus' healing power and also not experiencing it? How do we walk alongside others in those moments of tension?
- Read Luke 9:23-24. How do these words from Jesus challenge you in your current season of life?

Reflect and Discuss the Practice and Prayer.

This is an opportunity for accountability and formation in your group. Accountability to ensure people are practicing the practices and formation because we believe that these practices will shape and form us into the people that God intended us to be. Take time to practice this together and reflect on each person's experience of these practices.

Practice: Memorize Romans 6:5-7.

- Scripture memorization is an important practice and tool. Memorizing Scripture helps us in times of need to be able to recall God's truth where it can be a comfort. Or if we face spiritual attack, we can be like Jesus in the wilderness to fend off the lies.
- Tips for Memorization. Some people find it helpful to re-write the verse they are trying to memorize, some people find it helpful to record themselves speaking it aloud and playing it back to themselves, others find it helpful to think of the line of logic that is present.

Prayer: Everlasting God of hope, may we encounter Your goodness and mercy today. We invite Jesus the Healer to be at work in our lives. Bring healing to our sicknesses and diseases. Heal our broken relationships and broken hearts. Bring healing to our families, our friends, our communities, and our world. May Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. We pray this in the name of Jesus and for His glory, Amen.

Prayer Together.

Take some time to pray with each other. This is not a time for gossip or to be cynical, this is an opportunity to share with each other our burdens, to celebrate and praise God together, and to pray expectantly that God would move.