

Life Group Leader Guide
Believe and Be Changed
John 11 — The Resurrection Right In Front of You
Part 1: When God Doesn't Show Up

Theme

This passage invites us to wrestle honestly with what it feels like when God delays, disappoints our expectations, or seems absent.

Opening

Icebreaker (choose one):

Finish this sentence honestly (you don't have to explain if you don't want to):
"If God really loved me, then _____."

Transition:

John 11 begins not with resurrection, but with delay. This story speaks directly to seasons when God *could* act, but doesn't seem to.

Read the Passage

Read **John 11:1–16** together.

Listen for:

- Expectations
- Emotions
- Confusion
- What Jesus says *about* the delay

Expectations & Assumptions

"If You Love Us, You'll Come Now."

Key Idea:

Mary and Martha pray in faith—but their expectations about *how* love should work shape their disappointment.

Discussion Questions:

1. What assumptions do Mary and Martha make about Jesus' love?
2. Why do you think John emphasizes that Jesus *loved them* and still waited?
3. Can you think of a time when your prayer was sincere and faith-filled—but the answer didn't come the way you expected?

Insight:

Faith does not guarantee outcomes; it forms trust.

Faith positions us for God's will, not control over it.

Passage vs. Destination

“This illness does not lead to death.”

Key Idea:

Jesus reframes waiting, not as the end, but as a means through which God reveals Himself.

Discussion Questions:

1. What does it mean to see suffering as a *passage* rather than a *destination*?
2. Why is it often harder to trust God *in the middle* than at the beginning or the end?
3. How does the question, “*Am I in a passage or a destination?*” change the way we pray?
4. What’s a passage that you have been through or are in now?

Jesus’ Confusing Love

Because I Love You, I Will Wait

Jesus’ delay is not indifference; it’s deeper care aimed at transformation.

Discussion Questions:

1. Parents often choose not to give kids what they want but instead give them what they need. How had God done that with you?
2. What’s the difference between our *immediate wants* and our *deepest needs*?
3. Why do unanswered prayers sometimes reveal what we value most?

“For Your Sake”

When God’s Glory and Our Good Collide

Jesus is not glad about Lazarus’ death, He is glad about what their faith is about to become.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why do we often see God’s glory and our good as competing goals?
2. How does Jesus’ phrase “*for your sake*” reshape the way we interpret hardship?
3. What dangers arise when faith becomes transactional (“If I do this, God should do that”)?

Leader Insight:

God’s glory is not achieved *at our expense*; it gives us more than we thought we needed.

The Cross: Where Glory and Good Meet

Discussion Questions:

1. How does the cross answer Mary and Martha's prayers in a deeper way?
2. Why does the cross help us trust God when His purposes feel costly?
3. What does it mean that the greatest good God gives us is *Himself*?

Looking Ahead

Next week: **“When God Shows Up”**

Jesus doesn't arrive late; He arrives as *resurrection itself*.

Read **John 11:17–44** in preparation.