

The Lazarus Factor

Conversation Starters

- What was your first job?
- Pastor Steven said he thinks the worst job would have been to be Jesus' public relations manager. What's the last job you would want?
- You're at a meeting that was supposed to start 10 minutes ago — several people aren't there yet, and the rest are still small-talking. Are you more likely to: be anxious because your schedule is getting thrown off; calmly work on something else until the meeting starts; or, join in the small talk until everyone else arrives?

Review

Ask eGroup members to share their favorite points from the sermon, what spoke to them, a phrase or moment from the sermon they related to the most, or questions they have. If members have a hard time recalling the sermon, talk through your notes and share your favorite points.

Make It Personal

- Give an example of a time when God didn't do something by your schedule. What did you want and when did you want it done by?
- Read John 11:11-15. Is it easier for you to trust God's process or the outcome? (*i.e., Is it difficult for you to trust God's timing over your own?*) How does it challenge your faith when God doesn't do something when you want or the way you want it?
- What's something you went through that you wouldn't have chosen, but it showed you more about who God is? What did you learn about Him?
- Everybody has a Lazarus — that part of your life where you thought God would do

something, but He hasn't. What's your Lazarus? *(What's that part of your life where you "thought God would ...")* How has your Lazarus affected your hope?

- Look at John 11:21. Martha went to Jesus with her disappointment about Lazarus. We can let God know when we feel like He hasn't done what we've hoped for. How good are you at doing that? Do you think this can help our hope and trust in God? *(Encourage group members to share any challenges they deal with in being honest with God like this.)*
- Now look at John 11:22. God can do things "even now," after we think they're dead or impossible. The Lazarus factor is believing that even in pain and disappointment, God is with us — and choosing to follow Him even though things aren't going the way we want. How have you allowed your circumstances to drive your faith? How would having the Lazarus factor in your life grow your faith and your perspective? *(One part of this could be having the perspective that God has a better plan than the thing we were hoping for.)*
- Read Romans 15:13. The first line says, "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him ... " What does it look like to put our hope and trust in God versus putting them in what we want Him to do for us? How have you experienced each side?
- When we trust in God, we accept we can't control the outcome — but we can meet with Jesus like Martha and Mary did in John 11:20-29. Think about your Lazarus. Are you more like Martha or Mary in this passage? Why? *(Encourage group members to talk about how they identify with Mary or Martha in this passage and how they process their hope and disappointment with God. Martha went straight to Jesus, but Mary stayed at home.)*

Act On It

What steps do you need to take to be a Martha or a Mary this week? *(e.g., go to God with your disappointment, put your trust and hope in God instead of the outcome, work on developing an "even now" faith, etc.)* Tell the group what you're going to do.

PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAYER

Ask eGroup members to share any prayer requests they have. Record any notes or prayer requests to pray for members during the week.

Father, thank You for the Lazaruses in our lives. Speak to them this week. Help us open up those parts of ourselves to You so we can experience the love and resurrection You want for us. Show us anywhere in our lives where we've allowed ourselves to put our hope and trust in what You do instead of who You are. In Jesus' name, amen.