



The Lazarus Life | Lazar-US: Meeting Ourselves in Him • Week One •

February 18, 2018

John 11:1-45; John 12:1-3, 9-11

Seasonal Focus: We are in the season of Lent, where for centuries, people across all different faith traditions invested into this season for deep spiritual reflection, humility, learning, prayer, and placing themselves before God in a way that would shape them.

Opening: What do you like about listening to stories? What do you not enjoy about listening to stories?

Pastor Tracey reminded us: "Every good story provides a window and a mirror. A mirror helps us see who we are,...to see someone who looks, acts, talks, longs, aches, struggles like us. And ...a window...A look at hope and restoration, an opportunity to see something beyond our mirror."

- How will this reminder impact you as you engage this story of Lazarus during Lent?

Discussion: Pastor Eric Camfield introduced us to this "famous story of Jesus' raising Lazarus from the dead....a story that serves as a portal in which God offers each of us a lighter, larger, and more vital life than the one we have. This story of Lazarus is the story of US!"

The story comes from the **Bible**. (Hebrews 4:12, 2 Peter 1: 21)

- How have you experienced the Bible being living and active in your life?
- The Spirit of God inspired the authors of the scriptures. How have you experienced the Spirit speaking to you personally through His Word?

Find **yourself** in this story. (John 11: 1-45)

- Where do you find yourself in this story?
- Finding yourself in Lazarus at the start of the story, what is your sickness? As Pastor Eric phrased it, what is your soul-sickness? Where are you experiencing some dis-ease?
- Why is it helpful to acknowledge that you are sick?

Receive the story (love) .

- Pastor Tracey stated, "Transformation attracts us because we all need it." How do you respond to transformation being a need? What do you feel or do when this need surfaces? What about transformation is attractive to you?



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- Pastor Tracey continued, "Love transforms us. Transformation is not a process of earning or striving or achieving. It is a process of understanding and receiving the depths to which you are loved." How do you receive Jesus' love? What does that look like for you? Would you prefer that transformation be a process that you could earn, strive for or achieve?
- The name Lazarus means "whom God helps." How easy or hard is it for you to acknowledge that you need God's help?

Let the **story challenge** you.

- In what ways are you desiring life in a new way? How sick and tired are you of having life as it is? How sick and tired are you of trying to change yourself and not succeeding?
- Pastor Eric stated, "God is calling you forth to something that will be better than you can dream or imagine." What does this statement stir in you? ...excitement, hesitation, resentment, fear, hope?
- The same call that brought Lazarus out of death and back into life is offered to each of us. Transformation comes as a response to God. How will you respond to Jesus calling you out of 'death to self' and bringing you to new life in Christ with God at the center?

Practice of the Week

Self-Examination: to bring sins and propensities to the love of Christ and embrace practices that lead to transformation

- Acknowledge to God your propensity to rationalize, deny, blame and self-obsess.
- See yourself as God's loved and forgiven child. Find scriptures to read this truth to yourself.
- Throughout this series, listen to the song "Come Ye Sinners" by Fernando Ortega at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GGvCm9I4H0A>

Additional Resources:

The Lazarus Life: Spiritual Transformation for Ordinary People by Stephen W. Smith

Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practices: Experiments in Spiritual Transformation by Jan Johnson and Dallas Willard

We'd love to hear from you!

If you have thoughts, questions, comments, ideas on how to make these study guides more meaningful for you and your group, please let us know.

We would also LOVE to hear how God is using these Scriptures and study guides in your lives.

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CHRIST CHURCH



The **LAZARUS** Life



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