

LOVE IN A LOCKDOWN

Discussion Notes

LOSS IN A LOCKDOWN - TALK NOTES

This week we're turning our attention to a side of love that we don't often talk about: loss. What are you mourning the loss of a the moment?

Read through John 11 together.

When Jesus sees his friend Lazarus' body his response was simple: 'Jesus wept'.

- Why is this response so important? What does it teach us about Jesus in our grief?
- If Jesus is the perfect example of how to deal with loss, what can we learn about how we can response to grief in our own life?

Matt shared a passage from CS Lewis' book the "Magicians Nephew" when the little boy Digory, who is desperate for a cure for his mother's terminal illness, is talking to Aslan. The passage says:

"But please, please - won't you - can't you give me something that will cure Mother?"

Up till then he had been looking at the Lion's great feet and the huge claws on them; now, in his despair, he looked up at its face. What he saw surprised him as much as anything in his whole life. For the tawny face was bent down near his own and (wonder of wonders) great shining tears stood in the Lion's eyes. They were such big, bright tears compared with Digory's own that for a moment he felt as if the Lion must really be sorrier about his Mother than he was himself."

Matt suggested that sometimes we can be so focused on the claws and feet, or God's power, that we don't look to see his tears.

- Have you been looking to God for a miracle and grown frustrated in this time?
- How can we focus our attention on God's love and compassion for us? Has anything helped you remember that God shares in our grief?

In the final part of the story, Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead. In fact this is the 6th of the 7 signs we see in John's Gospel that point to Jesus as King. The 7th sign is his death and resurrection just a couple of weeks later. Matt explained that in both Jesus and Lazarus' death and resurrection we see that grief and hope often go hand-in-hand.

- If grief and hope go together, how can we find hope in this time of grieving?
- How can we keep in mind the bigger picture of Jesus' victory on the cross and the hope that brings, even when it is hard in times of grief?
- What practical things can we do to keep hope alive?

Prayer is especially important in these topics so make sure to set some time aside to pray for each other, Again, using Breakout Rooms or setting up smaller groups (get people to start new video calls with specific people) is a great way to enable people to open up a little more freely in prayer.

LOSS IN A LOCKDOWN - BIBLE STUDY

When studying a passage together it is often easier to read through section by section rather than the whole story, especially on video chats. After reading each section there are some questions that are always helpful to ask whenever leading a Bible study, such as:

- What stands out to you?
- Is there something you hadn't noticed or realised before?
- Is something difficult to understand?
- What can we learn from this passage and how can we apply it to our lives?

As well, as these questions, we've added some questions that might help generate discussion in your group for each section.

Read John 11:1-16

- What do you think Jesus means in verse 4?
- What do verses 8-10 teach us about Jesus' bravery and certainty in his mission?
- Verse 14 is pretty shocking! What can we learn about Jesus' purpose in this story, what is he trying to teach his disciples and us?

Read John 11:17-27

- What does verse 22 teach us about Martha's faith?
- What does Jesus mean in verse 25-26?

Read John 11:28-37

- What can we learn from Mary's honesty with Jesus in verse 32?
- How does seeing 'Jesus wept' affect our understanding of God? How did it change the view of the onlookers?

Read John 11:38-44

- How can this passage help us grow in faith?
- What can we learn about how to pray with faith from verses 41-42?
- What do we see about Jesus' authority in verse 43?

Then, you may want to end the Bible discussion with some big takeaway point:

- What can I learn from this passage?
- What is this passage teaching me about where I might be going wrong at the moment?
- What can I work on and grow in based on this passage? Is there an action, habit or practice I can put into place?