

The Delay Before the Display

Various Pastors | John 11:1–16

NOTE: As a guide, use these questions to help with group and family discussion or for personal reflection. Not all questions are needed. Select the ones that will best serve your group as you grow in Christ together through His Word. *Soli Deo Gloria*.

Ice Breaker

What's the most random item in your car right now?

Understanding the Text in Context

Looking back to John 10:7-18, Jesus reveals Himself as the Door and as the Good Shepherd who provides and protects His sheep. How do we reconcile this with Jesus staying 2 days longer after he heard Lazarus, one whom Jesus loved, was ill?

How does the reconciliation between God's love and people's suffering accomplish John's purpose stated in John 20:31?

Describe some specific ways that Jesus' control, Jesus' love, and Jesus' purpose all work together in John 11:1-16.

Connecting to Jesus and His Gospel

This passage addresses the question of why God allows suffering on a theological level. Why do we need something greater than temporary relief from suffering, sickness, and death?

Jesus knows that Lazarus will die, yet He also knows death will not have the final word. How does this point forward to Jesus' own death and resurrection?

How does the Gospel transform death from an ultimate defeat into something that no longer separates us from God?

Living Out the Truth

Where in your life are you currently experiencing a “delay” – something you’ve prayed for, hoped for, or expected God to do differently? How has that waiting affected your trust in Him?

When circumstances don’t make sense, what are you most tempted to question about God: His control, His love, or His purpose? Why do you think that is?

Pray for one another, especially if in a season of waiting or a “delay.”

Parenting Moment and Family Focus

Share a time when you were waiting on the Lord (a time of “delay”) that included an answer (an end to the delay). Looking back on that, what did you learn about Jesus’ love and purposes?

Discuss how “the glory of God” (v. 4) is so central to all of life.

Encourage and pray for one another in the waiting, in the delay.

Further Study

Waiting while knowing God — His love and His purpose:

- [Why Does God Make Us Wait for Good Things?](#)
- [Why I Believe God Is Sovereign over Suffering](#)
- [The Confusing and Perfect Love of Christ](#)

Why “soul sleep” is wrong. And, thankfully, there is a better reality after death:

- [When a person dies, where do his or her spirit and body go until the Second Coming?](#)
- [What does the Bible say about soul sleep?](#)
- [What Do You Believe About the Intermediate State?](#)
- [What Is the Intermediate State?](#)

Read the book: [Dark Clouds, Deep Mercy: Discovering the Grace of Lament](#) by Mark Vroegop

Read [The Bleakest Psalm Is Really a Night-light](#) and meditate on Psalm 88

Read your John Study Journals, looking ahead to next week’s sermon and text for John 11:28-44: “Jesus Wept,” “Obey and Believe,” and “Raised to Life.”