



Tackling The Text

John 11: Lazarus

Read John 11 (yes, the whole thing)...then answer these questions.

1. What is the most important thing you learned about Jesus' disciples? _____

2. What's the most important thing you learned about Mary? _____

3. What's the most important thing you learned about Martha? _____

4. What's the most important thing you learned about the enemies of Jesus? _____

5. What the most important thing you learned about Jesus? _____

TEACHER'S GUIDE

Instructions: Break your group up into several teams. Have each team read all of John 11 and then answer the questions. When all the teams have completed this project, discuss their answers with the entire group.

For Question #1: You might discuss their fear (v. 8). Odd that they would be afraid for Jesus in light of the amazing miracles they had seen. Ask your students if they are ever afraid to walk with Jesus. You might also discuss their commitment to Jesus (v. 16), that they were even willing to go and die with Him. Ask your students if they are willing to give everything (even their lives) for Jesus and His cause. Point out that they can demonstrate this commitment by the way they live obedience lives every day (Romans 12:1-2).

For Question #2: Note Mary's great faith (v. 32). She believes that Jesus is able to raise her brother from the dead. Ask your students about their faith in Jesus. Do they believe that He can do great things in their lives (Matthew 7:7, Mark 11:24).

For Question #3: Note that Martha is an interesting character. Like her sister, she has great faith (vs. 21, 24). However, she still has doubts (v. 39). Talk to your students about why this happens – why can a person who appears to have great faith still struggle with moments of doubt. Ask your students if they ever have doubts about the things they believe.

For Question #4: Note that the enemies of Jesus are determined NOT to believe in Him, no matter what evidence is presented. If anything would provoke them to reconsider their conclusion that Jesus was a bad guy, it would be His ability to raise dead people. But they did not reconsider their opposition. They became all the more determined to do away with Him (vs. 47-53).

Why did they do this? It is because their minds were closed to the truth. Once a person closes his mind, even the most convincing evidence will not change his mind. There are two lessons we need to learn from this. First, there will be some people that we cannot reach because their minds are closed. Don't waste your time arguing with people like this. Second, don't be that guy with the closed mind (1 Thessalonians 5:21-22). Be willing to study with other people, consider what they say (even if it's different from what you believe) and test it all by the scripture. Truth has nothing to fear from careful examination.

For Question #5: Note that this miracle serves as further evidence that Jesus was who He claimed to be (God who came in a human body). He could not raise the dead, and at the same time be wrong about His claims.

Notice that the evidence He gave to prove His claims was overwhelming and convincing. There could be no doubt that this guy was dead; no doubt that Jesus brought him back to life. This was a miracle beyond question or dispute.

Note also that this miracle demonstrated that Jesus has power over the thing we fear most – DEATH! We do not need to fear death as others do because our Savior rules over death.