

3 QUESTIONS

IS IT WORTH IT?

LEAN IN // 5 minutes

Share a story when *timing* worked in your favor? or didn't?

Sample answers:

- Before I left the party, I was introduced to my future spouse
- We bought a home at the TOP of the market... had to shortsale later
- I met someone at a tradeshow randomly that introduce me to the president of the company - I got a job thereafter

Leader Note: As we celebrate the beginning of Holy Week, Palm Sunday (John 12:12-13), there are many reasons why the crowds were celebrating the arrival of Jesus and his triumphal entry into Jerusalem. The problem for many of them and for many today is their flawed perception of who Jesus is and what He is wanting to accomplish. God's love for his broken and fallen creation is not a pampering but perfecting love. His timing is not our timing.

Transition: "Today let's look at how Jesus' way of showing up in our lives may test our beliefs but will bring him the most glory..."

LOOK DOWN // 20 minutes

Read John 11:1-7; 21-27 and 38-44.

Leader note: God's ways are not our ways and this story with Lazarus, will challenge your group to trust in His Lordship when your life seems dead, discouraging and disappointing...what a great contrast to the kind of King many in Israel thought Jesus might be... to overthrow Rome and reestablish Israel as a nation under God himself. This wasn't the way Jesus had come to bring His salvation to Israel at all. And similarly, this was the challenge of faith faced by Mary and Martha as they sought Jesus to save their sick brother Lazarus from dying.

What do you learn about belief that brings God glory?

Sample:

- Belief will be tested in difficulty - sickness, death (3)
- Belief that trusts in Jesus' words over circumstances (4)
- Belief that trusts in God's love & timing (5-6)
- Belief that trust in Jesus' power (23)
- Belief that life is found in Jesus, the Messiah (25-27)
- Belief that is persistent - Mary backpedals (39)
- Belief that takes action (41)
- Belief that does the will of God (41)

LOOK OUT // 10 minutes

Leader Note: In this passage, John points us towards Jesus by referring to the miracles as signs or clues of his true identity. These signs are to let us know who Christ is; the son of God. Jesus purposely waits longer to go and raise Lazarus from the dead to avoid any doubt that He has the authority, power and life as the Messiah only could have.

Where do people find it easier to believe, giving God glory?

Sample:

- When they have already seen a miracle happen
- When God intervenes in a way they think He should
- When someone prays and God answers immediately
- When life seems "easier" - we think God is about our comfort

Where do people find it difficult to believe, giving God glory?

Sample:

- When God's timing in answering our prayers doesn't line up

- When the outcome of our prayers isn't what we wanted
- When tragic things happen, it's difficult to see how God will bring good out of it

Describe someone whose belief brings God glory. How does it affect others?

- They see their life as belonging to God's, not themselves... others are confused, perplexed and attracted to Jesus
- They see Jesus as trustworthy, in control and their loving Savior ... people want that kind of peace
- They constantly look at their life as opportunities to give God credit... it's counter to our cultural values of personal success, applause, comfort

LOOK IN // 15 minutes

Leader Note: Help your group look at the areas in their life it's easy for them to give God the credit and glory He is due through Jesus work in them. And then help them reflect on an area that God wants to get glory through but because of fear, doubt or a desire to control, they are struggling to believe God can use that part of their story to bring Him glory.

What area is it easier for you to believe, give God glory?

- When I first sense God's call to go into ministry
- My distant past: I realized I needed Jesus for the first time, easy to talk about that
- I look at my health, family, job - easily cite God's blessings

What area do you find it difficult to believe, giving God glory?

Sample:

- My physical ailments I've prayed for - never been healed
- My finances are a mess, I've struggled to trust him with these

- I have been impatient in dating, settled for people I wanted vs God wanted

LIVE IT OUT // 10 minutes

Leader note: Jesus' power for salvation and expressions of His new life are at work and will reveal themselves in surprising ways as your group members trust in Him.

Encourage your group to see what may be a tragic, difficult or late-timing situation in light of God's good, loving and redeeming power. How might that change our approach to believing Him in the midst of life's surprises?

How could God get glory through your faith in Him this week?

Sample:

- I would see my health issue as an opportunity to trust in His resurrection life over my own
- I would see my financial stress as a way to trust God over my financial security
- I would not date until I felt God had brought the right person with the right values

What would it look like to bring God more glory together as you believed in him?