

the Royal

MAKING SENSE OF THE BIBLE

"But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." 1 Pet. 2:9

Week 10: "Milk n' Honey"

Pastor Dru taught us this week about the importance of our youth in our nation, and their impact for the furthering of the Church.

Two major objectives this week:

1. Much like last week, have everyone respond to the sermon. The sermon notes are included in case you, or others in the group, were unable to attend. Pastor Dru simply tied in the necessity of our youth and the importance of caring for them. Not only because of their age, but because of their youthful heart. We likewise can have a youthful mind and attitude.
2. We want to continue in our Read, Reflect, and Respond in John 11. This is the story about Jesus rising Lazarus from the dead. The main emphasis is not so much about rising Lazarus, but more so about the glory of God through Jesus Christ. If there is anything that the group takes away from the study, our hope is it is at least that.

Even if you are unable to follow the entire curriculum, or answer any of the questions, you are encouraged to be aware of the study notes and facilitate discussions that will meet these two objectives above.

In Him,

Rock Church Small Group Team

Part 1: Opening/Recap Weekly Challenge/Small Group Sermon Discussion

Opening:

- Open in Prayer
- Worship (optional)
- Recap Week 9 Homework
- Small Group Sermon Discussion

Recap Week 9 Weekly Challenge:

1. Recite **Luke 24:46-47**.
2. Discuss experiences practicing the **Discipline of Solitude**.

Small Group Sermon Discussion:

1. Pastor Dru did a great sermon on the story of Joshua and Caleb. Have everyone go around share what they learned from the sermon.

Sermon Notes

- ▶ The Plan: To be holy (cf. Num. 13:1-20).
- ▶ The Position: Get your "but" out of the way (cf. Num. 13:21-29).
- ▶ The Procedure: Obey God (cf. Num. 13:30).
- ▶ The Problem: "Grasshopper mentality" (cf. Num. 13:31-33; 14:1-5).
 1. Cried: Num. 14:31-32
 2. Complained: Num. 14:2-3
 3. Conformed: Num. 14:2-3
 4. Confused: Num. 14:6-11
- ▶ The Penalty: Wander around the desert (cf. Num. 14:21-23; 36-38).
- ▶ The Prize: Enjoy some "Milk n' Honey" (cf. Num. 14:24; Josh. 14:10-14).
- ▶ The Principle: Raise up the next generation (cf. Num. 14:28-29).

Part 2: Read, Reflect, and Respond – John 11

Read John 11:

Last week we highlighted and emphasized the resurrection, but this week we will look at Jesus' view of the resurrection in the midst of His earthly ministry. John 11 covers many different elements of the leading up to His arrest and execution. First, we discover the resurrection of His friend Lazarus, then we read about the conspiracy of the Jews to kill Jesus. Similar to last week, we will examine two major themes in this chapter listed below.

Part 2: Read, Reflect, and Respond – John 11

(continued)

Death and Resurrection of Lazarus

- ▶ Death is never the absolute end, but exists for the glory of God, so that He may be glorified (cf. 11:4).
- ▶ Death is often referred to as sleep in Scripture (cf. 11:11).
- ▶ Christ seemed to have planned on the death in some way, because He was glad for the sake of the witnesses that they would experience a miracle of resurrection (cf. 11:15).
- ▶ Going back into Judea was very dangerous for Jesus, as the Jews were waiting and seeking to kill Him. But Thomas states in v. 16, "Let us go, so that we may die with Him." Thomas' love for Lazarus, and Jesus, made easier to face the possibility of death.
- ▶ Jesus prophesied Lazarus' resurrection (cf. 11:23).
- ▶ Martha affirmed the resurrection in the last day (Rapture), but Jesus raised Lazarus to affirm that He is the resurrection and the life. It is all about his glory and grace that the resurrection even happens (cf. 11:25-26).
- ▶ Though He is the source and recipient of the glory of death, Jesus was drawn to emotion when He saw and experienced the sorrow of those that loved Lazarus (cf. 11:32-37).
- ▶ Miracles such as the resurrection exist for the sole purpose of belief in Christ alone for the forgiveness of sins. All miracles throughout Scripture were designed for the same purpose (cf. 11:38-44).

Conspiracy to Kill Jesus

- ▶ Despite the miraculous act of rising Lazarus from the dead, the Pharisees' hardness of heart drove them closer to religion and not the love and glory of God (cf. 11:47-48).
- ▶ The Lord used Caiaphas to prophesy the death of Jesus (cf. 11:49-51).
- ▶ It is important to understand the sovereign work God did through the death of Christ on the cross. Man thought he was in control, and history shows us that man has pointed the finger at select people as to the responsibility of His death, but it was really the moving of God that controlled it.
- ▶ Jesus was aware of this in avoiding the Jews after the resurrection of Lazarus. The timing of His death was completely in His control (cf. 11:54).
- ▶ The timing of the resurrection of Lazarus was right before the Passover, which is when Jesus Himself would die, and raise Himself from the dead. This signifies the strategic and sovereign power of God in executing His plan of redemption (cf. 11:55-57).

These points highlight the sovereignty of Christ. The miraculous things that Jesus did were never meant to be the focus of His ministry, but they were simply an arrow directing us to Him. This is the most important thing we can understand when reading about His miracles and healings.

Part 2: Read, Reflect, and Respond – John 11

(continued)

- ▶ Read John 11 as a group.

Reflect John 11:

1. Why do you think some people were receptive of Christ after rising Lazarus from the dead, and others were not receptive, reporting Him to the religious authorities?
 - ▶ The simple answer is, they simply were completely hardened in their hearts. Nothing Christ did would be good enough for them.
 - ▶ This is a lot like Pharaoh when after he experienced miraculous plagues; he still refused to release Israel from their slavery (cf. Ex. 7:3).
 - ▶ Also important to remember the Sadducees do not believe in the resurrection at all. So though it is a phenomenal miracle, they would pass it off as magic or sorcery, rather than a divine act of God (Matt. 22:28-29).
2. Re-read John 11:49-53. Caiaphas made a statement that would change the face of history. What is so important about this claim he had made?
 - ▶ Just as mentioned in the notes of the "Read" section. God's sovereignty was involved in Jesus' betrayal, as He was His death, burial, and resurrection.
 - ▶ Jesus was not a victim of injustice as we often think He was. He was justice made flesh. If it wasn't for the events that follow in chapters 13-21, we wouldn't be able to approach the Father. IT'S ALL ABOUT JESUS!!!

Respond John 11:

1. Jesus prayed to the Father in verses 41-42 that the reason for the things He has said, and the things He has done were to acknowledge that the Father sent Him. What has your reaction to the miracles in Scripture typically been?
 - ▶ The purpose of this question is to draw out what people typically think about Jesus. Many claim to be Christians but will often deny His work.
 - ▶ Others will stress the importance of miracles without the importance of repentance. In Matt. 9:1-18, Christ healed a paralytic, but not before He forgave Him of His sins. The miracles in Scripture are always synonymous with repentance and the forgiveness of sin.

Part 2; Read, Reflect, Respond – John 11

(continued)

- ▶ Of course we really want people to look at everything biblically, to allow the text to speak for itself, rather than build a theology off of our own opinions.
2. Explain if you or someone you know came to faith in Christ by a miraculous healing. What happened and how has your life changed because of it?
- ▶ Sometimes it is great to hear other people share their stories of how they came to Christ. Even if somebody doesn't have a "miraculous" story, encourage them to briefly share their testimony.

Part 3: Weekly Challenge

- ▶ **Scripture Reading Guide:** Go through the devotions that correspond with each day. These are given to everyone in their lesson plan every week. (July 5-July 11)
- ▶ **Scripture Memory:** "Jesus said to her, **"I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?"**" **John 11:25-26 (NASB)**
- ▶ **Bible Study Tool:** Navigate through www.searchgodsword.org and discover the great resources available for free for your personal gain.
- ▶ **Spiritual Formation Practice:** Each week we will introduce a "spiritual discipline" that each person can try to adapt to their personal devotion. This week is the **Discipline of Meditation.**

When we typically think of meditation we think of eastern religious chanting, or yoga positions. But meditation is quite biblical when put into the Christian context. Dr. Don Whitney states simply "The Bible itself explicitly warns that if we do not look intently at (that is, meditate on) God's perfect Word, we'll forget it: "But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does" (James 1:25, NASB). Just as hearing the Word of God without meditating on it causes a person to be a "forgetful hearer," so anyone who reads the Bible without meditating on it becomes a forgetful reader. And if you can't remember what you read, you probably won't experience or be changed by what you read."

Part 3: Weekly Challenge

(continued)

Simply, meditation is the process of remembering all we read in Scripture, and allowing the Word of God to transform us (Rom. 12:2).

This week we will practice the following:

- ▶ Memorize John 11:25-26 as part of the weekly challenge.
- ▶ When you pray this week, pray what you read and memorized in the passage.
- ▶ I would also encourage you to pray through the Psalms. This is a great way to pray and meditate in accordance with the will of God.

* This is something that will take practice. It is a discipline that takes nurturing and cultivating. Do not be discouraged if it isn't something that you are picking up right away.

We pray the Lord blesses you this week as you grow in Him.