

# **Growth Group Questions**

*5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent, March 26, 2023*

## **Introduction**

Our needs don't get much greater than the one addressed this week. Discuss with your group how you handle sharing comfort with people who've lost a loved one, both when the person was a believer and when the person was not.

## **Into the Word** – 2 Kings 4:17-37

1. This text deserved a sermon this week, but you only let me do one per service. This Shunammite woman is described as “well to do” in verse 8 before our text, but also generous. She sets up a room for the prophet and feeds him whenever he travels by. What special blessing did God give in return? (2 Ki 4:13-17)
2. Verse 23 shows that the Shunammite woman not only put faith into action through hospitality but also in regular worship. Why are both of these important for spiritual health?
3. The woman refuses to talk to Gehazi (We're not the only ones who say “I'm fine...” when we don't want to talk.) but won't leave Elisha's side. Nothing happens when Gehazi puts Elisha's staff on the boy, but Elisha raises the dead. In the next chapter Gehazi will be punished for greed (2 Ki 5:20-27). What can pastors and church leader learn from these two?

## **Into the Word** – Romans 8:11-19

4. Read verses 9-11 to get a fuller sense of Paul's line of thought. In what way are believers both dead and alive? How does this help explain the “second death” of Revelation 2:11?

5. According to verse 17 suffering is an essential part of being a child of God, not an accident or an unexpected problem. Why? And how does verse 18 teach us to endure?

## **Into the Word** – John 11:17-45

6. This text as appointed skips verses 28-37. What do we learn about Jesus in those verses that made me HAVE to include them?
7. Martha is a perfect example of Christian mourning. Describe how she is sad at Lazarus' passing but hopeful at the same time. How do Christians go through the stages of grief differently than others? (And we do go through the stages!)
8. Martha came to Jesus as soon as she saw him. Mary had to be asked. Lazarus was dead. But they all received blessings from Jesus. Explain how this is an example of Gods grace. (Undeserved love.) Share a time in your life when you have been one of these three.
9. What questions would you have for Jesus or for Lazarus if you were there at Bethany that day? Discuss with the group and celebrate Jesus' power and compassion.

## **Closing Prayer**

In this world of darkness and sadness, we thank you Lord for this reminder that you are a God of power and love. Turn us from sinful thoughts of selfishness and despair, and strengthen the faith of new life you have given. Make us a fountain of truth that others would share our eternal hope as well. Thank you Jesus, Amen.