

Getting Started

Welcome to the first week of our Online Connect Groups! It's our hope to get to know each other a bit better, support one another through this time, pray together and discuss the scriptures using questions connected to the weekend's sermon in the ["That You May Believe" series](#) on the [gospel of John](#).

Please take some time to review and answer the questions below. Feel free to have a journal handy to record your thoughts.

Getting to Know Each Other *(Suggested time: 30 min)*

As you start of your group time take a minute to get to know each other—maybe share your name and answer a few of the following questions. Have some fun!

- Where were you born?
- What's the worst job you've ever had?
- How did you get connected to Lincoln Berean?

Study Questions *(Suggested time: 40 min)*

Please complete these questions prior to your group's meeting time. Your group's host will select 2-4 questions that will be discussed together during your gathering time.

- 1) This past weekend we looked at an amazing miracle that God did through Jesus in raising Lazarus from the dead. As you think back over this weekend's message, what was one key insight that God gave you? Are there any specific actions you can take based on that insight?

- 2) In the opening verses of John 11 we learn several things:
- Lazarus is sick (vv. 1, 3)
 - Jesus loves Mary, Martha & Lazarus (vv. 3, 5)
 - Jesus does not immediately go to help them (vs. 6)
- How do you think Mary, Martha & Lazarus felt when the messenger returned and said Jesus was not coming right away?
- 3) Have you ever been in a trial or suffering and it seemed like God was absent? Would you be willing to share about that experience?
- 4) In verse 14, Jesus expresses a desire to deepen the faith of his disciples. Faith & believing in Jesus is a key concept throughout the gospel according to John and it is mentioned 5 times in this story (verses 14, 26, 40, 42, 45). How has God allowing suffering or trials in your life weakened or strengthened your faith?
- COVID has us all suffering, and in our grief, it can be hard to find God or faith during these times. If this were an opportunity for you to deepen your belief, what steps of faith could you take?
- 5) In verses 35 & 38 we see one of the most beautiful demonstrations of the love of Jesus. Even though He knows God is about to call Lazarus from the tomb, Jesus pauses to grieve and weep with the people he loves. How have you experienced/not experienced God's love during your times of pain and confusion?

- Read Hebrews 4:14-16. Mary & Martha experienced these verses in a very personal way and they brought their situation to Jesus and found grace and mercy in their time of need. For what situation do you need to find mercy and grace?

Prayer *(Suggested time: 10 min)*

Prayer is an important part of each Online Connection Group. Often those who are new to a group may be reluctant to pray aloud; others are so comfortable that they can unintentionally take over the prayer time. So, we have a few suggestions for these first few weeks as group members are becoming comfortable with one another.

- 1) **The Host Prays.** During discussion of the above questions, take note of the things people are sharing. As you are wrapping up your discussion offer to close in prayer and pray for each individual/couple according to what you have heard.
- 2) **Invite Short Prayer Requests.** Invite people to share a prayer request in 2-3 sentences. Write each request down. Invite others to pray for a request if they want to or just pray for the requests on your own.