

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

GROUP GUIDE: WEEK 24

CONVERSATION STARTER

If you were going to describe your reputation in one word, what word would you use and why?

SO GOD MAY BE GLORIFIED

Jesus tells Martha that everything he's about to do—bringing Lazarus back from the dead—is for God's glory, and the Son's with him. "Glory" is one of those Christianese words that we often hear in church but don't use in everyday conversation, so it can be confusing.

The Hebrew word for "glory" is *kavod*, and while it literally means "heavy," in the Bible it conveys a sense of weightiness, particularly in regard to a person's reputation. A person with a good reputation has more *kavod*, or respect and honor, to their name. Humans were created as God's representatives; we image God, and therefore, we are designed to reflect God's glory, or *kavod*, to the world around us. This isn't simply about making God look good, it's about showing the world who God is and inviting them to "come and see" for themselves. Unfortunately, many times the way we live does the exact opposite.

But then comes Jesus. Where we often fail to glorify God, Jesus is the truly human one who reveals God's character in the way he lives and through his miraculous signs. Bringing Lazarus back from the dead glorifies God because it reveals God's great sacrificial love for His people. And it points forward to the moment when Jesus will fully embody all that God is—his mercy, love, justice, and grace.

For all those who don't believe, the cross will look like the ultimate failure and shame; what good is a dead Messiah? But Jesus tells Martha, for those who believe (who have the eyes to see it for what it truly is), the cross is the place where God's glory (His reputation, the full gravity of who God is) will be on full display. And the Son of God, the one who would give his own life to save those he loves, is also glorified at the same time.

Take a moment to discuss this idea together as a group. How are we called to reveal God's glory (His gravity, reputation) through the way we live, work, and play?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What stuck out to you about the reading from this week? Was there a verse or idea that was particularly meaningful or challenging for you?
2. Jesus was deeply moved by the death of Lazarus. When you look at the world around you, what are you deeply moved by?
3. How can we best sit with those who are in mourning or going through a difficult time?
4. As much as you feel comfortable, share about a miracle God worked in your life that, at first, felt impossible. How did this experience change your perception of or relationship with God?

WEEKLY PRACTICE

For our practice this week, we're going to read, listen, and reflect. First, read [Ephesians 2:1-10](#). Then, [listen to the famous hymn, Amazing Grace](#), which is all about how God calls us out of our own individual 'tombs' because of His great love and grace for us. Finally, reflect using the following questions.

- What tombs has God delivered you from?
- Are there any tombs you think God wants to deliver you from today?
- How are we called to live in response to God's saving grace?