
The Gospel of John: That You May Believe

"When God Delays"

John 11: 1-16

Thoughts to Shape and Spark Discussion:

"There is no attribute more comforting to His children than that of God's Sovereignty. Under the most adverse circumstances, in the most severe trials, they believe that Sovereignty has ordained their afflictions, that Sovereignty overrules them, and that Sovereignty will sanctify them all . . . it is God upon the throne that we love to preach. It is God upon His throne whom we trust." - Charles Spurgeon

"A great mystery: to redeem our brokenness and lovelessness the God who suffers with us did not strike some mighty blow of power but sent his beloved son to suffer like us, through his suffering to redeem us from suffering and evil. Instead of explaining our suffering, God shares it." -Nicholas Wolterstorff

"Hast Thou not bid me seek Thy face,
And shall I seek in vain?
And can the ear of sovereign grace,
Be deaf when I complain?
No still the ear of sovereign grace,
Attends the mourner's prayer.
Oh may I ever find access,
To breathe my sorrows there." - Anne Steele

Themes and Questions to Guide Reflection and Response:

What from the Scripture passage or the sermon made an impression upon you? Are there lingering questions to be answered? What is God showing you about Himself and yourself in this passage?

Are you experiencing a delay in your life between your cry for help and God's help? What is it like in the midst of that waiting? Where are the flashpoints and the victories?

How does the display of God's sovereignty in this passage strike you? Is it comforting, as Spurgeon says, that God ordains, overrules, and sanctifies your trouble? How are you able to access that comfort? How is that comfort feeling distant in this season for you?

What does it mean to you that "instead of explaining our suffering", Jesus shares in it? How do we see that in this passage and in the ministry of Christ more generally?