

FACILITATOR / TEACHER GUIDE

Now & Then – Session 3

Trusting Jesus When Resurrection Is Delayed

John 11:1–44

SESSION PURPOSE

This session forms participants theologically around one of the most difficult realities of life in God's Kingdom: **Jesus is faithful, present, and powerful—even when He appears late.**

Using **John 11** as the central narrative, participants will explore what it means to trust Jesus in the tension between resurrection that is real and restoration that is delayed. Rather than resolving suffering quickly, this session helps participants learn to locate faith **inside delay, grief, and unanswered expectations.**

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- Understand John 11 as a living example of the “already / not yet” Kingdom
 - Recognize delayed resurrection as a formative testing of trust
 - See that belief and grief can coexist faithfully
 - Identify how Jesus reveals Himself *before* circumstances change
 - Reframe waiting as a space where deeper trust is formed
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KEY PASSAGE

- **John 11:1–44** (primary text)

Supporting Scriptures:

- John 11:25–26
 - Romans 8:24–25
 - Hebrews 11:1
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SESSION LENGTH

60–75 minutes



MATERIALS NEEDED

- Bible
- Participant discussion guide
- Pen

SESSION FLOW

1. WELCOME & RE-ORIENTATION (5 minutes)

Facilitator Guidance:

Reconnect the group to the series theme. Remind them that Session 1 named the tension, Session 2 located it within us, and Session 3 now explores it through a Gospel story.

Opening Thought:

John 11 shows us that resurrection faith is not only tested by death—but by **delay**.

Opening Question (optional):

When have you trusted God's power but struggled with His timing?

2. THE PROBLEM OF DELAY (John 11:1–6) (10 minutes)

Teaching Focus:

Jesus receives the request—but intentionally waits.

Read Scripture:

John 11:1–6

Key Insight:

Jesus' delay is not indifference; it is purposeful—but deeply confusing.

Facilitator Notes:

Resist the urge to soften the tension. The delay must feel real before it can become meaningful.

Discussion Question:

Why is delay often harder to trust than absence?

3. MOVEMENT 1 – BELIEF THAT KNOWS THE TRUTH (John 11:17–27) (10 minutes)



Teaching Focus:

Martha expresses confident theology—while still feeling real loss.

Read Scripture:

John 11:20–27

Key Truths to Emphasize:

- Martha's belief is orthodox and sincere
- Her grief does not cancel her faith
- Jesus reveals *who He is* before changing the situation

Reflection Questions:

- What does Martha believe is true?
 - What does she still feel deeply?
 - How does Jesus shift the focus from future resurrection to present trust?
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4. MOVEMENT 2 – GRIEF DOES NOT DISQUALIFY FAITH (John 11:28–37) (10 minutes)**Teaching Focus:**

Jesus enters grief fully—even knowing resurrection is coming.

Read Scripture:

John 11:32–35

Key Insight:

Jesus weeps, not because resurrection is impossible—but because death still hurts in an unfinished world.

Facilitator Tip:

Do not interpret Jesus' weeping as weakness. It is divine compassion.

Discussion Questions:

- What does Jesus' response reveal about God's posture toward grief?
 - Why is it important that Jesus weeps *before* the miracle?
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5. MOVEMENT 3 – RESURRECTION POWER BEFORE FINAL RESTORATION (John 11:38–44) (10 minutes)**Teaching Focus:**

Lazarus is raised—but he will still die again. This is resurrection power, not final restoration.



Read Scripture:

John 11:38–44

Key Emphasis:

- Resurrection life has begun
- Death is interrupted, not eliminated
- This miracle points forward, not outward only

Facilitator Insight:

Help participants see that this moment previews the Kingdom without completing it.

Reflection Questions:

- How is Lazarus’s resurrection both hopeful and incomplete?
 - What does this teach us about life between resurrection and restoration?
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6. MOVEMENT 4 – FORMING TRUST IN THE IN-BETWEEN (10 minutes)**Teaching Focus:**

Trust is not formed by instant intervention, but by learning who Jesus is while waiting.

Read Scripture:

John 11:25–26

Romans 8:24–25

Key Truth:

Faith is not trusting outcomes—it is trusting **Jesus Himself**.

Discussion Questions:

- Where do you find it hardest to trust Jesus’ timing?
 - What would it look like to trust who He is before what He does?
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7. SUMMARY & CORE INSIGHT (5 minutes)**Key Insight:**

Jesus is the resurrection—even when He seems late.

Core Takeaway:

Delayed resurrection is not denial. It is a place where deeper trust is formed.

8. FINAL REFLECTION & PRACTICE (5 minutes)

Final Reflection Question:

Where might Jesus be calling you to trust His presence before His resolution?

Practice for the Week:

- Read **John 11:17–27** daily
- Sit with Jesus' words: *"I am the resurrection and the life"*
- Pray:
"Jesus, help me trust You here."

Closing Prayer:

Pray for grounded trust, patient faith, and hope that endures delay.

FACILITATOR REMINDER

Do not rush resurrection.

The story teaches us **who to trust before what to expect**.

