

ENCOUNTERS

DISCUSSION GUIDE

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to community group! We believe that people come to faith and grow in their faith when they get to spend time reflecting on God's Word, and also spending time with other Christians. That's what we're hoping for tonight. Here's what's happening in the broader life of the church:

- **New City Guys' Game Night: Friday, February 21st**

Gentlemen...come on out to the church building for games. If you've got a favorite game feel free to bring it though some of our resident game masters will bring several favorites. Also **bring something to drink (soda, beer, etc.) and a snack to share**. Invite friends! P.S. Whether you're a pro board gamer or don't dig the idea of games, *come join us*. There'll be food and drink (and other fellas who probably don't love games either. Just come and join Pastor Josh walking around and chatting).

- **Ash Wednesday: February 26th**

We're going to gather for worship at 7p on Wednesday, February 26 @ the church building to mark the beginning of Lent and our journey toward Holy Week & Easter. Children are more than welcome to participate in worship but there will only be childcare for children ages 4 and under. RSVP for childcare on Church Center.

Jesus & the Mourners

(John 11.17-37)

Open up with a prayer for your time together: giving thanks for the community God has given us, asking for encouragement amongst one another, and for God to be honored, etc.

OPENER

Rate your past week 1-10, but no 5's. Explain why you gave it the number you did.

This Sunday we closed out our ENCOUNTERS series. In the next series we're going to be going back through these same chapters, but looking instead at the miracles of Jesus which John calls SIGNS. But this week, we're looking at a story where Jesus talks with two sisters mourning the death of their brother.

STUDY/DISCUSSION

This week we wrap up our Encounters series homing in on John 11.

>> **READ** >> *John 11.17-37*

1. Real quickly, discuss the basics of the story. Who? What? When? Where? Why? How? (If you need more help, read v.1-6 as well)
2. vv.17-24 -- What do you think of Martha's interaction with Jesus? Are we meant to see her in this story in a positive or a negative light (or somewhere in between)?
3. vv.25-27 -- How does Jesus respond to Martha? What truth does he speak to her?
4. vv.28-32 -- Contrast Mary's reaction in this story to that of Martha. Who do you think you're more like?
5. vv.33-35 -- How does Jesus respond to Mary?
6. John Calvin says that in this story we see "how many defects there are in the faith of even the best people." How does that inform your own faith journey with God?
7. Potamius of Lisbon (writing about 350 A.D.) said, "God wept, moved by the tears of mortals." What does this mean for us when we experience grief and loss?
8. The PCA Book of Church Order describes the duty of deacons as ministering "to those who are in need, to the sick, to the friendless, and to any who may be in distress," and deacons themselves are to be people of "warm sympathies." Deacons are to lead us in this, but to some extent we are all called to this kind of ministry. Is God calling you to apply this in some way to your life on mission for him?
9. Is there a way this story encourages or challenges your faith?

PRAY

Take some time and pray together. Focus on Jesus as welcoming the mourners and as our compassionate high priest who understands our pain and suffering.