



Into the Light

Scripture: John 11:1-44

Prayerfully read through the account of the death of Lazarus in John 11:1-44. Is there anything new that you are aware of in this story? Record this new awareness or insight in your journal.

Reflection:

On your weekend, you listened to the story of Mary and Martha's sorrow over their brother's death and their encounter with Jesus when He showed up in their town four days later. Jesus was not physically present with Mary and Martha when Lazarus died. Yet when he arrived four days later, the sisters were able to express their sadness, and pour out their disappointment and sorrow.

"If only you had been here, my brother would not have died."

In the safety of your Spirit Circle, you had an opportunity to identify your sadness and name your losses. You became aware of where you physically carried sadness in your body. You may have given that sadness a color, a shape or a sound. How did it feel to be able to honestly express and name your own sorrow and then share it with Jesus during the weekend?

Though Jesus was not physically present with you during your losses, He promised us that by going away, He would send us someone even better!! In John 16:5-33, Jesus talks about the work of the Holy Spirit and what it means to walk with Him in our grief. Please read this passage and answer the following prompts:

- What verses in John 16:5-33 are especially meaningful to you at this time?
- Record these particular verses in your journal- paying attention to what Jesus is promising YOU through this scripture. Now read the passage again aloud and insert your name in each one of these promises. Sit quietly and breathe in this truth!

Soul Training:

The truth is, as long as we are living here on this planet, we will continue to experience sadness and losses- in our lives and in the lives of those around us. It is important to be aware of our feelings and sorrows as they come up in our hearts and return to the ONE who knows our intimate thoughts and feelings. Our feelings give us direct access to communicating with God if we can be present and conscious of what our body, heart, mind and spirit are telling us. In Romans 8:22-27, Paul addresses the common pain of living in this broken world and how the Holy Spirit intercedes for us. The Holy Spirit gives a voice to our pain through his holy groans.



- This week, read Romans 8:22-27. Choose to walk into the light and become aware of the truth that the Holy Spirit is very present in our pain and suffering as well as our joy.
- Are you currently grieving an old or new loss? As you quiet yourself, begin to see where your new/ongoing losses reside in your body. Allow yourself time to acknowledge your feelings- give them a color, sound, or shape.
- Write out what you have lost in a journal. Sometimes it is helpful to draw or paint, expressing your feelings through color and shapes on paper. Honor yourself and the Holy Spirit by taking the time you need to talk to the Lord about these losses. Allow him to comfort you through the awareness of the Holy Spirit's presence.
- If you are not personally in a season of sadness, have you been able to walk with another person who is grieving? Can you give them the space they need to feel sad- without rescuing, offering advice or trying to fix them? Could you just BE present with them in their sadness?
- How does it feel to not have to "fix" someone else's sadness, and instead comfort them with gift of being present to their grief?
- Pray for those areas of sadness in your life and in the lives of those who are suffering. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you encounter the compassionate, kind Jesus who wept with Martha and Mary in their grief. Thank the Holy Spirit who is our Counselor and Comforter. In Him we have *everything* we need. He has the power to transform us to be more like Jesus in all of our circumstances.

Prayer:

Thank you Lord that your Holy Spirit is present with me in every moment and in every situation. Thank you for walking with me in the darkness and in the light. Lord I praise you that there is nothing that can separate me from your love. Amen.