

# WEEK 4: GOD KNOWS YOUR PAIN

## Jesus Raises Lazarus from the Dead

*Then Jesus wept.* – John 11:35

### Read: John 11:1-44

Someone who had recently lost a loved one summed up people's responses this way: "Some people aren't able to show up. Some show up and have no idea what to say. And some show up, have no idea what to say, but they sit with you and cry with you and say, 'I love you.' Those are your true friends." There are times in life when the pain is too deep for words and any attempt to say the "right" thing will fall flat. In those times, what people really need is empathy. Someone to sit with and cry with them. Someone to share in their pain.

Empathy is our ability to understand and share the feelings of another. It goes beyond sympathy, which is simply feeling pity for someone. Empathy gets down in the muck of grief with someone else and says "I want to feel your pain. I want to help you carry it."

John 11:35 is one of the shortest verses in the Bible. It simply says, "Then Jesus wept." Why? Why would he weep when he knew this story was going to have a happy ending? One logical speculation is that he was feeling the pain of his beloved friends Mary and Martha after their brother's death. He was sad because they were sad. He had empathy. The obvious miracle of this passage is that Jesus raised a dead man to life. But it's also pretty miraculous that we get a glimpse of Jesus, fully God and fully man, weeping. The God we worship is not a distant, faraway, aloof God. He is a God who became like us, experienced emotions, and felt our pain. He is a God who can empathize with us.

### QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT:

1. Think about a time when you were grieving. What were some things others did that were helpful to you? What wasn't helpful?
2. Who do you know who is hurting right now?
3. What practical steps can you take to let them know that you are "with them" in their pain?