

DAY 23 WEPT



John 11:35

Jesus wept.

Our text today comes from a fascinating story in the life of Jesus. At the beginning of chapter 11, we see Jesus talking with two sisters, Mary and Martha, about a beloved brother, Lazarus, who had fallen ill. Now Lazarus was a good friend of Jesus. In fact, the text says that Lazarus was one that Jesus loved."

Within the conversation with his disciples as well as the two sisters, he assures them that Lazarus is "sleeping" and that he was going to "wake him up," communicating that this sleep would be good for his healing. The people

weren't putting it together; they assumed Jesus was lost or confused about the situation with Lazarus. But all along, you see Jesus assuring the people that he was going to raise Lazarus from the dead.

Jesus arrives on the scene, and everyone is in mourning. There is weeping and crying and pure raw emotions. The sense of loss is profound and visceral. Now, this entire time Jesus knows that he is going to raise Lazarus. He alludes to it at the beginning of the story, mentions it throughout, and even goes to the site in order for him to raise Lazarus.

But as he arrives on the scene, he doesn't rush into the healing. He takes in the pure raw emotion. What is most striking is that he is so moved by the emotion that it saws, "Jesus wept."

Think about this...Jesus knew he was going to raise Lazarus, but rather than rushing straight to fix things, rather than reassuring them that they didn't need to feel the pain because he was going to "fix it," he sits in the emotion. And not only attends to them in that space but attends to his own emotion.

Jesus wept.

Each of us sits next to a pool of our own tears. All of our experiences are different, but no one escapes life without wounds. For all of us, the "pool of tears" is the result of both our own doing as well as the result of other's actions. These tears remind us of the grief and losses we have suffered throughout our lives.

These pools may be caused by the death of a loved one, the pain of a divorce, the abuse of a child, the unmet longing for an intimate partner, the loss of a job, or the rejection of a close friend.

What I find so profoundly beautiful about this story of Jesus is that rather than rushing into the raising of Lazarus, Jesus enters the space of grief. But enters this space of grief not to solve but to experience and walk through his own emotions.

"Jesus grants us the gift of his own tears. His tears remind us that God weeps with us grieves with us, and suffers with us. Those who travel the Lenten journey in Jesus' intimate company discover that his tears represent the empathy of God."

There is a profound depth and beauty to a God that weeps. It is stunningly human and raw that Jesus would enter into the space of grief. He could have avoided it, he is capable of not having to experience those dark nights of the soul, but instead, he enters into the grief. He enters into your grief and my grief. Jesus wept.

Daily Practice

Take some time today to be alone with the Lord. Share aloud your "pool of tears" and listen to what God has to say in response.

The below reflections are written by congregants & staff of CPC. All reflections are following Trevor Hudson's book Pauses for Lent and are both heavily influenced and borrowed from his work. Any quotes without attribution should be credited to him.