

**NEXT STEPS** Series: "Jesus the Stranger" Message title: "Recognizing God's Savior and King" **3/23/25**  
Next Steps are designed to be used in your small group settings. Need a group? Let us help!  
*Today's scripture lesson comes from John 11:35-53. It is not printed here due to length. Please read the entire passage prior to completing this Next Steps.*

Today is the third Sunday in the season of Lent. Lent is a season of preparation. Are you preparing? If so, what are you preparing for? If not, why are you not concerned with preparation? What is more important?

Have you ever received a diagnosis that was really scary? Maybe you were relieved when the doctor gave you the treatment options and you found out that it was completely curable. Do you remember the relief that came? What would keep you from following through on the path to health? When the answer is right in front of you . . . when it is clear . . . but yet we take it for granted. Right now, think of that antibiotic you received and somewhere along the line you just simply stopped taking it. Am I the only one? Or, do you follow the whole plan?

John 11:35 tells us that Jesus wept. Why in the world is it important for us to know that Jesus cried? What does it tell you about his knowledge of the grief we experience? Does this display make him more relatable for you? Have you ever really thought about it?

Read John 11:35-53. Lazarus is raised from the dead. How do the people respond. Remember, when Jesus comes into a situation, there are usually a line of division drawn. What are the two sides? What causes those two sides? Dig deeper on this one.

Read Matthew 10:34-39. Remember that division we talked about? It is on full display in this passage. What sorts of things happen when light is brought into dark places? There should be peace. Do any of the parties mentioned in the passage find peace? From where does the joy come? What do those people "see" or "get" that brings them to that place?

Following Jesus isn't always easy. It actually sets you up to be at odds with others. We sometimes forget the truth of the miracles we have seen. We often get caught up in the legalism that becomes attached to religion. How can we put those things down? How can we not pick them up to start with? How can we learn to remain connected to Jesus and focus on his goodness? How does it help to truly recognize and remember that Jesus is the Savior and King that was sent to redeem us? How do we lose sight of that?

Our own personal agendas get in the way. Are you truly praying that God's kingdom will come? Are you truly praying that God's will be done? Are you praying for the things of heaven to be experienced here? Let that be your prayer through this season of Lent. Who deserves to join you on this journey? When will you ask? Remember, we have gathered in worship; now it is time to go and be the church.

***"Living intentionally in a Christlike manner to bring glory to God"***  
**the Church**