

Would Jesus Leave Room for Cream?

BY BARRY SHAFER

Quick Backdrop

Would Jesus leave room for cream? Picture yourself in a Starbucks, ordering coffee with Jesus. You place your order, Jesus places His order, and the barista asks Jesus if He'd like room for cream. What do you think He'd say? Actually, the answer to that question, which we'll get to in a minute, isn't as important as this: picturing yourself in a Starbucks with Jesus. Why? This is the kind of familiar relationship Jesus desires to have with us.

1 Digging In (God, Show Me!)

We see Jesus forging this kind of relationship throughout the Gospels, but especially in John 11, a chapter made famous by the raising of Lazarus from the dead, and by the shortest verse in the Bible, John 11:35, "Jesus wept." But the most insightful part of that chapter occurs in Jesus' interaction with Lazarus' sisters, Martha and Mary. You may want to read the entire chapter of John 11, but a couple of bite-sized chunks are noted below. Note the friendship between Jesus and this family and how Jesus reacts to their grief.

John 11:5 (NIV)

⁵ Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.

John 11:32-33 (NIV)

³² When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." ³³ When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled.

2 Taking It Inward (God, Teach Me!)

We are first introduced to Mary and Martha in Luke 10:38-42 when they welcomed Jesus into their home. This scene was made famous by Martha's attention to the tasks of hosting Jesus and Mary's attention to Jesus Himself. We can easily deduce from the verses above that within the months between the visit in Luke 10 and Lazarus' passing in John 11 that the siblings and Jesus had formed a tight bond. In fact, it's safe to say that Martha, Mary and Lazarus were Jesus' peeps, His tribe, His Starbucks entourage...the friends with whom each of them processed the events of the day.

This is probably why "Jesus wept." Jesus was deeply moved and troubled by the grief of His friends. In fact, the Greek word John used that we translate "deeply moved" (John 11:33) was a word used for a snorting horse. That's quite the visual image.

3 Putting Into Practice (God, Change Me!)

Jesus knew He'd be raising Lazarus from the dead. He wasn't grieving the loss of Lazarus. He was grieving the experiences of His friends, heartbroken over His tribe enduring the consequences of the Fall. This is what caused him to snort cry.

There is something wildly encouraging about that. Jesus cries when we cry. He laughs when we laugh. He loves you. He desires a deep and familiar relationship with you. So, make today a day you nudge in a little closer to Jesus. Try this:

Get a cup of coffee or a favorite coffee drink, or any favorite beverage, and pour out your thoughts to Jesus. Type into an e-doc or write in a journal your thoughts on any or all of the following:

Your fears.

Your anxieties.

Your dreams.

Your frustrations.

Your hurts.

Your regrets.

Your joys.

Let Jesus enter in with you on your life experiences. He desires a relationship with you that's more comfortable and familiar than any relationship you have.

And finally, to the question "Would Jesus leave room for cream?" I direct you to Deuteronomy 6:3, a description of the land of Jesus' ancestral roots. You can draw your own conclusion.

Fold or Cut