

JESUS IS THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE

John 11:1-44

Key Verses: 11:25-26

Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?”

In 2015, a 14-year-old boy fell through the ice on a lake in Missouri and drowned. It was the nightmare of every parent. His mother rushed to the hospital wondering “why.” John was too young to die. Death is a cold and dreaded reality that we all must face. Although death is a necessary part of life, it is painful and sorrowful. Death can consume us and cause us to doubt who God is and if he really loves us. Let’s pray that through this passage we can truly believe that Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life and **live** by believing in him.

Part 1: **SO THAT YOU MAY BELIEVE** (verses 1-16)

So far in our “I am” series we learned from the gospel of John that Jesus is the Bread of Life, the light of the world and the Good Shepherd and Gate. These claims are to help us believe that Jesus is the Messiah. Now, we will hear one of the most powerful proofs of the deity of Jesus Christ and of his Messiahship---as we come to the story of raising Lazarus from the dead—the greatest miracle of Jesus before his death and crucifixion. Lazarus had an unknown type of sickness that he later died from after a short time. Martha and Mary lost their brother so suddenly. They were so sorrowful, not only because they lost their loving brother Lazarus so soon, but that Jesus waited to come even though he had a love and trust relationship with Lazarus and his sisters.

When he heard that Lazarus was sick, Jesus said that this sickness will not end in death. Then look at verses 14-15, Jesus said, “Lazarus is dead, and for your sake I am glad that I was not there, **so that you may believe**. But let us go to him.” Jesus is saying the purpose of death is to help his disciples believe in Jesus. What did Jesus want them to believe? 1. That death is not the end. It is just sleeping as Jesus explained; Lazarus had fallen asleep and that he was going there to wake him up. 2nd: Jesus has power to raise the dead. Their faith was very limited. They believed that Jesus could heal people, but they thought there is no way he can raise the dead. How many times do we say that this is the end also? We can say, there is no way out, I don’t know what to major in or I can’t find a job or there’s no way I can get married. How many times do we limit Jesus in our own life? Jesus wanted to teach his disciples through Lazarus’s death that they may believe he can bring the dead to life. I personally limited Jesus also. I had an accidental discharge with my own gun and the bullet went through the back pocket of my

pants barely missing my leg by mm. I thought that it was the end of my job, the end of my marriage engagement, I was paralyzed with fear just like the disciples.

However, Jesus wanted to help me to **believe in him**. Jesus battled against the spirit of death while one of the disciples, Thomas said to the rest of the disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with him.” Although Jesus gives spiritual life to his disciples by saying that this happened for the glory of God, they did not believe it. They were under the power of death. This can be an awakening for us. Even though we may follow Jesus, just like Thomas, we may be under the power of death as well. Let us examine our hearts in front of God. May God reveal any type of death grips on our life and ask him to free us from them. May we follow Jesus with the belief that whatever we go through is to help us believe in him. Amen!

Part 2: **JESUS SAYS HE IS THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE** (verses 17-37)

Look at verse 17, it says, on his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Humanly, it was too late. Now Jesus could only offer his condolences. By this time many Jews had come to comfort Martha and Mary in the loss of their brother which solidifies that Lazarus was indeed dead. Martha came out to greet Jesus and told him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” She was saying “Jesus, why didn’t you show up earlier. Why did you wait so long to come?” She was indirectly blaming Jesus for her brother’s death. Then she said, “But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask.” Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” Martha thought that he was referring to the 2nd coming of Jesus when the all the dead would rise.

Jesus responded to Martha with this declaration in verses 25 and 26. Can we all read it in one voice? Ok, altogether: Jesus said to her, “I am the **resurrection and the life**. The one who **believes in me** will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by **believing in me** will never die. Do you believe this?”

So far there has been one word that appeared in most of the “I AM” statements so far. Do you know what it is? Can anyone guess? Besides I AM. It’s the word, “whoever.” “Whoever” means that this promise Jesus offers is for everyone. Jesus said I am the Bread of Life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry. I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness. I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. Now, Jesus says, I am the resurrection and the life. And whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Here we learn two profound truths:

First, Jesus gives new life to those who believe. Resurrection means a raising up, rising, rising from the dead. Isn’t resurrection a glorious word? There is only one prerequisite for resurrection: death. Unless death is present there can be no resurrection. Many people are living physically but they are spiritually dead. Jesus’ saying, “I am the Resurrection and the Life and

whoever believes in me will live” means that when we believe in him we are born again just as Jesus said in John 3:3, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again." Before this, we are dead spiritually, but God brings us back to life. When we are born again spiritually, we receive a new spirit in us. We are essentially **resurrected** but with new spirits: Jesus living in us. Jesus gives new life to those who believe in him.

Second, what does it mean to believe in Jesus? Belief in Jesus means to obey and love Jesus. In John 14:23 Jesus says, “Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.” Believing in Jesus means to have a deep, personal, intimate relationship with Jesus. When we love someone, we talk to that person, spend time with them, tell others about how great they are, their likes become our likes, their dislikes become our dislikes. Jesus wants us to believe in him by not only coming to him in set times like personal prayer, bible reading, bible study, and testimony writing, which are all good things to do. Jesus wants us to come to him wherever we are like walking down the street, driving in our car, exercising, waiting in the store, in the classroom at school, doing homework, or in the cafeteria.

When we love or care about someone we think about them multiple times a day. Jesus loves us and thinks about us, and he wants us to think about him too. The more we thank him for little things, the more he becomes real, and we can believe in him. Once, after working all night til 6am, I had to wait for an office to open at 9am for an appointment and it was not worth it to go back home. So I took a nap in the back of my car. I was so tired. When I opened my eyes I felt miserable, like Dracula seeing the sun, my eyes hurt. I was hungry and cold. It was about 20F and windy downtown. I was complaining a lot but then at that moment, I stopped complaining and just started thanking Jesus for what I had: like thank you God for my feet that I can walk, and thank you God for the sunshine and for my shoes on my feet and for my jacket because I would have been colder. Thank you for letting me work downtown and for giving me good health. You know what, everything started to change. God was resurrecting me from my complaining and ungrateful spirit and giving me strength and joy. When I arrived at my appointment to drop off the form, I was so joyful, not cold or hungry anymore. I believed in Jesus that he was my resurrection. I experienced Jesus’ Resurrection life in that moment.

What does it mean that if we believe in Jesus we will live? It means that we will have eternal life.

What type of belief was Jesus talking about? It was to believe in him that he is the Messiah, the holy Son of God who came down from heaven to earth to lead us to his Father. Messiah also means Savior. Jesus came as the Savior to save us from our sins. Romans 6:23 says, “The wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.” We are all under the sentence of death, every single one of us. The good news is that Jesus is our ultimate second chance. Jesus came to be the Savior of the world and to resurrect all of us spiritually speaking. Ephesians 2:4-5 says, “But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in

mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.”

Also, in our own lives, we can be overwhelmed with people around us who are often in a state of sorrow, darkness, and doubt. However, wherever Jesus is there is Resurrection power. The power of resurrection is a foreign, rare concept. It was not even thought possible in this story with everyone thinking of death. The word death was mentioned 10 times and the word resurrection or rise again only 4 times. However, death could not stand up to Jesus who declared, I am the **resurrection**. He said to Martha “your brother will **rise** again.” Jesus is the only one that truly believed what he said. Martha believed that her brother Lazarus would rise again later. Jesus was saying, not just later. I am the resurrection right now. Jesus said, “I AM,” meaning present tense. He did not say, “I WILL BE.” He meant at the moment Martha was standing in front of him, he wanted her to believe that he is the resurrection.

Death is the permanent termination of all biological processes which sustain an organism. Death is the end of physical life. We live with elements of death all around us. There is unbelief, doubt, hopelessness, failure, disappointment, rejection. Sometimes we feel ashamed, lonely, not good enough. We feel afraid, anxious, worried. However, Jesus is greater than all those things. Jesus is the resurrection. He can resurrect us from no matter what situation we are in. We just must believe in Jesus.

Who here wants to experience Jesus’ resurrection power daily? Can you do something for me? Take out your cell phone or planner and go to your calendar. Select Nov. 8 tomorrow. Put in the title, Jesus is my resurrection power. Put the start time at 7:00am for instance. Then put in the notes: Jesus is my resurrection power and will help me overcome anything today. I pray that this can be a practical way to think about his resurrection power and be reminded of it daily. Now, put your phones down.

Verse 35 says that when Jesus went to the tomb, he wept. However, it was not too late for Jesus to do something in this sad situation. Let’s see what Jesus can do.

Part 3. JESUS SHOWS THAT HE IS THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE (verse 38-44)

Look at verse 38, Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. Jesus was moved again. He was standing at the tombstone like in a cemetery. The stone covering the entrance indicated that Lazarus was permanently dead and there was no reason to open the tomb anymore. If someone is buried, you will not unbury them. However, Jesus said take away the stone. Martha responded, “But, Lord, by this time there is a

bad odor, for he has been there four days.” Lazarus’ body was already decaying with a foul stench.

Let’s read verse 40 together. “Then Jesus said, ‘Did I not tell you that if you **believe**, you will see the glory of God?’” Please say to your neighbor, “if you believe, you will see the glory of God.” Although our situation may look bleak, if we believe, we will see the glory of God.

After they took the stone away, Jesus looked up and prayed, “Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me.” Jesus thanked his Father God so they could see that he received power from above. Jesus wanted them to believe that he was sent by God and that he is the Messiah

Then Jesus called in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” At that moment something amazing happened: the cells of Lazarus were reawakened, his decayed skin began growing back, color was coming back to his face, his eyes opened, and his muscles started to firm up and stiff joints starting to loosen up, his ears opened. Lazarus sat up and walked to the sound of Jesus’ voice. His hands and feet were wrapped with strips of linen and a cloth around his face. He looked like a mummy. So Jesus said to them, “take off the grave clothes and let him go.” He was not dead anymore and did not need any grave clothes. He was alive again. Jesus who is the resurrection, resurrected him. Jesus, who is the Life, brought life back again to his lifeless body.

In 1994, when I was 16 years old, my dad was tragically killed in a car accident. I became spiritually dead not able to feel any emotion. Although I attended a Christian church regularly I did not have faith that my dad’s death could glorify God. I felt powerless. I felt fear and sadness. I refused to deal with the sorrow and pain that entered my life and deliberately ignored the stark new reality of life without my father. To overcome my sadness, I plunged into a busy schedule full of different activities of pleasure seeking and running after girls. I wanted to also be successful. After graduating from Moraine Valley Community College, I transferred to Columbia College with the dream of becoming a famous TV news anchorman. So, I moved out of the house and got an apartment by U.I.C. Soon, I started studying the bible with Msn. David Won. After having one-on-one bible study for 6 years, I went to a summer conference in 2004 and deeply accepted God’s word from Luke 15, the Parable of the Prodigal son. When my dad died, I felt I spiritually died with him. Although I did not have an earthly Father, I saw the love of my Father God, waiting patiently for me with his open arms. I saw myself as that prodigal son who ran away not only from his sorrow, family, and his responsibilities, but even from God.

After this conference, I started coming to Sunday Worship Service faithfully, even though church was an hour away. Later, I wanted to serve God and accepted his call to be a bible teacher and shepherd for others. Then, God helped me meet my suitable helper, a beautiful woman of God, Jenna whose name means gift of God. God blessed us with three children, two of whom are identical twin boys, just like my bible teacher has. Jesus resurrected me from dead

hopes to just want to be a famous anchorman and gave me the life---Jesus himself living in me so I can now report the good news through UBF TV news—please subscribe! But also I can share the gospel with spiritually dead college students whom he wants to resurrect and give them his life who I now serve at Loyola. However, I still struggle to overcome my spiritual death. I have gone out so many times to invite students to bible study, but none seem to grow. Many times, I feel like I can get fired because many changes at work and fear that I can fail. God wants me to learn to live by having resurrection faith by believing in Jesus that he will help me overcome no matter what the challenge is. Praise and thank God for his absolute grace and blessing on my life!

Jesus can raise the dead and give them new life. I started this message with the sad news of a 14-year old boy who drowned. He was clinically dead for 45 minutes with no heart beat. His mother prayed at his hospital bedside and his pulse returned. Doctors said if he survived he would not live a normal life. Now, he is fully restored as a college student, studying to be a pastor (see the movie “Breakthrough”). Recently, in our own church, Dr.Charles Kim was raised back to life after falling while exercising at home. Jesus is the resurrection and the life. Jesus is giving new life among us in so many ways. Jesus is giving new life to college students and to our children. We heard inspiring testimonies about this last Friday. Praise Jesus who is the Resurrection and the Life!

Today we learned that Jesus is the Resurrection and the life. Although we are spiritually dead, he gives us a second chance. Jesus wants us to believe in him through a personal love relationship with him. He wants us to truly know him not only with head knowledge but to believe in him and experience his resurrection power in our daily life so his glory can be revealed. Do you believe this? Let’s read our key verses 25-26 again. Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?”