

I Am the Resurrection
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John 11:32-46

Jesus said..., *"I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live..."* (John 11:25 (ESV))

It's one of the great struggles for many of us so let's discuss it: What should you say when someone has lost a loved one? What should you NOT say? How can you help as time passes?

In John chapter eleven we have the fifth of Jesus' "I AM" statements: *"I am the resurrection."* Jesus didn't just say it; He DID it by raising his friend Lazarus from the dead. This would be the seventh sign Jesus would give that proved He is God's Son (and, in fact, God Himself.) It would also be the sign that put His crucifixion in motion and would lead to the ultimate resurrection – His own.

Here we see: one death, four days of delay, two sisters with different personalities, One Savior with two different responses, and a resurrection that proves Jesus came to conquer death for those who trust Him as Savior and Lord.

- The backdrop: The Jewish leaders wanted to kill Jesus so He retreated because His time to die had not yet come. A messenger came with the troubling news from Mary and Martha: *"Come quickly, Lazarus is sick."*
- Jesus sent word back: *"Lazarus's sickness will not end in death. No, it happened for the glory of God so that the Son of God will receive glory from this."*⁴
- That was encouraging! Then Jesus waited two days. That was puzzling!
- Finally, Jesus said, *"Let's go."* His disciples warned: *"They'll stone you!"*
- *"Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but now I will go and wake him up."*
- *"If he's sleeping he'll get better!"* *"Lazarus is dead."*¹⁵ *And for your sakes, I'm glad I wasn't there, for now you will really believe. Come, let's go..."*ⁱⁱ
- When Jesus arrived in Bethany Martha came running toward Him.
- Martha and Mary were sisters with very different personalities. Okay, Bible students, how would you describe Martha? Mary? (Luke 10:38-42)
- Verse 21 – Practical, take charge, problem-solving Martha *"said to Jesus, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. 22 But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you.'"*
- Martha wasn't disrespectful, but how does her personality show through?
- **23** *Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." 24 Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." 25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, 26 and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?"*

- Though Martha didn't understand the timing, her response was SPOT ON: **27** She said to him, *"Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world."*
- What do Martha's words in those verses teach us about her faith? What do they say about God's patience with our human nature? What should those verses teach us about our own faith?
- Jesus went to the tomb of Lazarus; Martha went to get Mary.

John 11:32–46 (ESV) — 32 Now when Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet, saying to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." **33** When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled.

- Mary's words were the same as Martha's. What was different with her?
- How did Jesus respond differently to Mary compared to Martha?
- Our lesson writer: *"Jesus responded differently to Mary than He had to Martha. Rather than giving facts and logic as He had with Martha (see vv. 25-26), Jesus approached Mary on an emotional level."*ⁱⁱⁱ
- How can this be a lesson for us as we comfort people who are grieving?
- People grieve individually and we should respond to them as individuals.

34 And he said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." **35** Jesus wept. **36** So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" **37** But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man also have kept this man from dying?"

- Scholars speculate on why Jesus wept. Why do you think He wept?
- Tears over sin, hard hearts, lack of belief, yes, but there's more here.
- Wiersbe: *"Our Lord's weeping reveals the humanity of the Saviour. He has entered into all of our experiences and knows how we feel. In fact, being the perfect God-Man, Jesus experienced these things in a deeper way than we do. His tears also assure us of His sympathy; He is indeed "a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" (Isa. 53:3)"*^{iv}
- During His time on earth Jesus modeled what Paul would later write. We should, *"Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep."*^v
- Spurgeon: *"A Jesus who never wept could never wipe away my tears."*^{vi}
- First Jesus responded in His humanity; then He responded in His divinity.

38 Then Jesus, deeply moved again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. **39** Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord, by this time there will be an odor, for he has been dead four days." **40** Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?"

- Practical Martha is again giving Jesus direction! It's okay to come to Jesus asking, *"What about this?"* He will patiently remind us: *"Did I not tell you?"*

41 So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. **42** I knew that you always hear me, but I said this on account of the people standing around, that they may believe that you sent me."

- The Father always heard Jesus' prayers and Jesus thanked Him for it.
- Jesus died so we could be adopted children of the Heavenly Father.
- Remember our Heavenly Father always hears the prayers of His children.
- We also need to remember that even in our times of suffering, God will demonstrate His faithfulness in order to draw others to Himself.

43 When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out." **44** The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

- This moment should have settled any doubt about Who Jesus is.
- There were two distinct reactions from the watching crowd:

45 Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what he did, believed in him, **46** but some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done.

So, What's the Takeaway?

- In this account we see some practical lessons about death and grief:
 - Jesus' delay teaches us that while God's plan may not make earthly sense we have to trust that we will be comforted and God will be glorified. We may never fully understand but we can trust.
 - Like the people in the house consoling Mary, we need to just be present for those who grieve. We don't have to be profound in what we say, we just have to be there and acknowledge their grief.
 - Martha teaches us it's okay to bring our questions to God when we've suffered loss as long as we also hold firm to our belief that He is Lord and we can trust Him even when we don't understand.
 - The differences between Mary and Martha's personalities and Jesus' responses teach us that every person grieves differently so we should comfort them individually. Never try to tell someone how to grieve, just be there to support them as they do.
 - Jesus' tears remind us that He has compassion for us in our sorrow because in His humanity He too experienced sorrow.
 - Jesus' raising Lazarus reminds us that He has complete power over death and that resurrection power gives us hope in our grief.

- Look at verse 44 for one more important point. Jesus was giving practical instructions to the people to get Lazarus out of the grave clothes. His words jump off the page with greater meaning: *“Unbind him, let him go.”*
- That’s what Jesus does for us when we trust Him as Savior and Lord.
- We are born trapped in the tightly wound grave clothes of sin and death.
- When we repent and believe, Jesus commands death, hell, and the grave: *“Unbind them and let them go!”*
- Jesus died so we can be free from bondage to guilt and sin. Because of His own resurrection, we have hope for eternal life.
- Jesus says to us as He said to Martha: *“I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?”*
- We should all respond as Martha did: *“Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God...”*
- That confession gives us the confidence that though a Christ-follower dies, yet shall we live forever with Him.

ⁱ Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). [Holy Bible: New Living Translation](#) (Jn 11:4).

ⁱⁱ Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). [Holy Bible: New Living Translation](#) (Jn 11:11–15). Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

ⁱⁱⁱ Explore the Bible QuickSource Guide - Lifeway

^{iv} Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). [The Bible exposition commentary](#) (Vol. 1, p. 337). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

^v [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Ro 12:15). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

^{vi} <https://www.spurgeon.org/resource-library/sermons/jesus-wept/#flipbook/>