

I AM the Resurrection and the Life 13/10/24

- *What do you think heaven will be like?*
- *Do you have any fear of death?*



The most important thing to remember is that Jesus works on both sides of the grave: For those who believe there is hope this side of the grave that He will transform us, that our hearts can be changed. There is hope on that side of the grave that we will be clothed in righteousness forever and ever and ever. That is our hope.

Read John 11:17 -37

This part of the well known story of Lazarus being resurrected centres around his sisters, Mary and Martha, and their discussion with Jesus during which Jesus declares: I AM the Resurrection and the Life. The sisters are in grief, their brother has only been dead for four days and they have been eagerly waiting for Jesus to arrive. Both the sisters greet Jesus with frustration that He had not arrived sooner to heal him. They were asking the “If only... “ question that we all ask at times.... Jesus allows them to ask these questions and accepts their emotions.

- *If Jesus is all knowing, why do we need to pray, why do we need to tell Him how we think and feel?*
- *Do you feel able to express your emotions - good and bad - to God?*

It is good for us to express ourselves to Jesus. Jesus knows what we feel but when we share it with Jesus, we let Him into the situation and give Him permission to work. Later on in this story Jesus wept with emotion.

The statement “I AM the Resurrection and the Life” is something we view through our knowledge of the New Testament, but the sisters would not have understood it the same way. Jesus is declaring Himself to be ‘the Resurrection’ before that event had occurred. The Resurrection is a person - Jesus - who is standing in front of Martha asking her to believe - to put her trust and hope in Him. The word believe is used 4 times in a few verses so is obviously important.

- *What is the difference between knowing and believing?*
- *Which is more important to Jesus?*
- *What is the difference between a resuscitation and a resurrection?*

The Jews believed that a person could be resuscitated up till three days after death, so this would be why Jesus waited until the fourth day to go to Bethany. He wanted to make sure that Lazarus would be considered 'dead-dead' and that the power of God would be revealed in a resurrection. Resuscitation is a restoration of the old life, while resurrection is a raising to a new life. Jesus wants us to be resurrected and do a new thing in our lives, not just return us to the old life. He wants to transform our lives, but for that to happen, we need to experience death. Jesus won the victory over sin and death for us on the cross and through His resurrection.

John 17:3 "Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent." It is important that people know Jesus, not just know about Him.

Death is inevitable ... but for those who believe it is a move to something more wonderful. In 1 Corinthians 2:9 Paul writes: "What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived"— the things God has prepared for those who love him." And Paul has seen glimpses of heaven, so he writes from experience.

"For those of us who are in Christ, to move from this life is not a tragedy but a promotion" (Geoff Strife?)

- Does this statement give you a different perspective of, or help you feel differently about death?

**For those of us
who are in Christ,
to move from this life
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But the One who is the Resurrection and the Life works on both sides of the grave. Our lives here have to end for us to have a glorious new beginning with Him, but it is just a step into another dimension. If our spirits are already in Christ, it is just our bodies which fade away.

But on this side when we have received our salvation, we can think that we have done enough, that the status quo is enough. But Jesus wants to change us. He accepts us the way we are, but He doesn't want us to stay there - He wants so much more for us - to change us, to resurrect us from our old lives and give us a new life. There are areas in our lives where Jesus wants us to die, so that he can resurrect us into something more.

- *What do you believe?*
- *Do you believe and how will you respond to the Resurrection and the Life?*
- *Will you allow God to transform your heart and life?*

This study includes some quotes from people who are not able to be acknowledged as the notes were taken from a recording. The recording is on the AFC website