

THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE

“I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die.” —JOHN 11:25-26

Lazarus had been dead for four days and lying in a cave. Family and friends were mourning his death. He may have been a gifted man, a clever and kind man, but none of that mattered now. Everything good about him was gone, and only a body exists. There are many people who feel that way. They're empty inside, no fulfillment, no joy; they simply exist. Jesus said, “I have come that you might have life, and have it to the full” (John 10:10). That presupposes something very important - that they don't have life.

The Gospel is about coming alive. It's about being regenerated and receiving new life. All the miracles Jesus performed are pointers to spiritual realities. The story of Lazarus is an exemplary illustration of what it means and how it happens that a person becomes alive. We are all born spiritually dead, separated from the life of God. We may not realize or acknowledge it, but the deepest need of the human heart is to connect with God; thereby becoming spiritually alive by the only means possible... through Jesus Christ.

Mary and Martha were close friends of Jesus as was their brother, Lazarus. Jesus loved them, and yet when He received news of Lazarus being gravely ill, He deliberately delayed His coming. When Martha heard He was on His way, she ran to meet Him. “Lord,” she said, “if you

had been here, my brother would not have died.” Her sister, Mary, rushed out, greeting Him in the same way. In effect, they were telling Jesus, “You are too late.”

How often have we felt that way? We recognize that Jesus Christ is the source of life, but then we think if only He’d come sooner, and like Martha and Mary, we’re left with a sense of hopelessness. Jesus said to Martha, “Your brother will rise again.” “I know he will rise again,” she answered, “in the resurrection at the last day.” Martha first relates the power of Jesus to past tense – “if only you’d been here”, and then to future tense – “in the resurrection at the last day”. Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life.” Present tense.

Martha didn’t realize she was standing in the presence of the One who deals with the here and now, the One who is eternally present. Jesus Christ, Himself, is the answer to every need of the human heart. He delayed His coming so that He could demonstrate that He is the resurrection and the life. This is something we all need to grasp, and know that regardless of how disparaging our circumstances, it’s never too late to come to Jesus.

PRAYER: Precious Lord, thank You for giving us life, for being our life and the answer to all our needs.

TO REFLECT UPON: Am I drawing upon the indwelling life of Christ when faced with difficult circumstances?