

Jesus, in His Own Words

The Resurrection and Life

John 11:25-26

March 23, 2025

HDBC

Quote from Swindoll:

Death is an inescapable fact of life. It is ruthless; it frequently comes without warning and strikes without mercy. Death is unrelenting; it cannot be cheated, bribed, outwitted, overcome, or eluded. Death is indiscriminate; It takes you and old, poor and rich, sick and healthy, wicked and benevolent. And death is universal; all must ultimately succumb to its darkness. Death is a harsh reality of life, but it was not always so, and it need not be the end.

There has always been a fascination regarding death and what happens next. All kinds of philosophies, from reincarnation to annihilation. They were debated even in Jesus' day and have not gone away.

Though many are getting it wrong, it is positive that people are interested in the afterlife. Not only will you live after you die, but you can decide where you will live. **The choice you make is directly tied to your relationship with Jesus Christ.**

Current series: Jesus, in His Own Words. Seven times Jesus said ***I am*** followed by some descriptive word or phrase. Pictures that provide insight into just who Jesus is and how we can relate to Him. Bread, light, a door, a shepherd. This one is different.

READ TEXT – John 11:25-26

Jesus not only was raised from the dead, proving the reality of resurrection, but He also declared Himself to be *the resurrection*. That declaration was made in the context of a conversation with a woman named Martha, whose brother had died. Review the entire story while working through the outline.

Here are six things Jesus did in the context of that declaration.

1. He paused (1-17)

Jesus had some really good friends in Bethany. Lazarus, Mary, and Martha. Two sisters and a brother. Lazarus got sick. We are not given details, but his sisters did all they could to make him better. In spite of their best efforts he got worse. It was clear that he was fading fast. They sent word to Jesus. They knew He would come & Lazarus would be fine.

Jesus got the message in time. But did something we had not seen Him do before. This time, rather than running to help, he paused. While he was hesitating, and the sisters were hoping, Lazarus died.

This was unexpected behavior, but he did so for a reason. He didn't pause because he was uninterested, or because He was unsure of what to do, or because He was afraid of His enemies in the area. There was something important that He wanted to teach Mary, Martha, the disciples, and us.

The best way to teach that was to let Lazarus die. That is a strong thing, but the truth He wanted to impart is a strong truth. **God's timing is not always our timing.** Sometimes He pauses when responding to our need. When He does it is always for a good reason.

2. He comforted Martha (18-23)

When he saw Martha and her grief He offered words to console her. If someone comes to you when you are down and discouraged and puts arm around you, that's to comfort you. That's what Jesus does for Martha. That's what Jesus always does when He is present. We don't always know what to say and sometimes it is not necessary to say anything. But Jesus knew what to say, not just to comfort her to but teach us a truth. ***Your brother will rise again.***

I should point out that **Martha and Mary both had real faith, but it was limited faith.** Believed Jesus could have prevented it had he been there, but were not sure about what he could do now.

3. He made a bold declaration (24-26)

It was through His conversation with Martha that Jesus was prompted to make this startling declaration. Martha agreed that her brother would live again in the resurrection, but she didn't realize that she was standing next to one who claimed to be the resurrection and life.

What does His declaration mean?

First, it points to His own death and resurrection.

Jesus, the son of God, was crucified on a Roman cross. The immediate reason was the hatred of the religious leaders of that day. They wanted him out of the way. **The real reason was our sins.** He died for us. After being beaten, & sentenced, they nailed him to a wooden cross. On that cross he suffered until he died. No one denied that he was really dead.

They took his lifeless body and placed it in a tomb for temporary keeping until they could carry out a proper burial. It turned out to be temporary for another reason. Before they could retrieve and formally prepare the body, Jesus was resurrected, never to die again.

Second, it points to our own death and resurrection.

Jesus not only declared himself to be the source of resurrection life, but offers it to all those who trust in Him. **Consider the age-old question, is there life after death?** Jesus makes it abundantly clear that the answer is yes.

The Bible teaches that all people will be raised from the dead. The unbelievers to eternal separation from God in a place called Hell, and believers to eternal life with God in a place called Heaven. **The believer is born twice and dies once. The unbeliever is born once and dies twice.**

I must remind you that Scripture offers no hope for the person who does not believe in Jesus as Lord and Savior. Those who refuse the free gift of life through Jesus Christ, have forfeited their opportunity for eternal life.

4. He grieved with the family (27-36)

Note verses 33-35. **He was deeply moved and He wept.** Jesus Wept!

Not wail or cry aloud, but rather to begin to shed tears. Quietly, but deep grief that can be seen in the trail of tears on person's cheeks. Why did he grieve?

1. Death of Lazarus? No. He would raise him.
2. Bring Lazarus back from Heaven to Earth. Maybe.
3. Empathize with Mary and Martha. Most likely.

5. He prayed for those watching (37-42)

Jesus then proceeded to move to the cave. Ordered the stone removed. Note Martha's lack of faith. Worried about the smell. Why? Not what they would want to remember their brother by. By the way, there was a belief in that day among some, that the spirit of the dead person hovered around the body for three days, but was gone on the fourth. This is not Biblical and not true, but waiting until the fourth day may have been a reflection of that belief.

Apparently Jesus had already prayed and knew the Father had answered. Now He simply thanks the Father for hearing. His concern was not only that the miracle take place, **but that it be used to draw people who see it to the truth about Christ.**

6. He brought Lazarus from death to life (43-44)

- A. Personal - Lazarus - All the dead would have come
- B. Clear - Come out of grave, leave arena of death
- C. Liberating - Set him free

Can you imagine the celebration! What a scene? What a victory. But that victory was only a prelude to the ultimate victory over death that would be won on a borrowed cross and in a borrowed tomb. There death would be stripped on its power forever.

Great picture of the call to salvation. Personal, call to leave arena of dead, call to be free from bondage of sin.

7. Takeaways (There are three)

1) When God pauses, He is acting in love

Notice what it says about Jesus right before he paused. (vs 5) **Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.** His pause was in response to His great love for them. When God pauses, it is not a sign of indifference or unconcern, but of His deep love. Remember that.

2) There is life after death

As sure as I am real, the resurrection is real. *Socrates was asked, **Is there life after death? I hope so, but no one can know.*** He may have been great philosopher, but he did not know much about God.

Of course there is life after death. Bible is clear. There will come a time when every person will be resurrected to stand before God either to enter a glorious eternity in Heaven or to be banished into Hell.

Winston Churchill chose to believe. He arranged his own funeral. There were stately hymns in St. Paul's Cathedral and an impressive liturgy. But at the end of the service, Churchill had an unusual event planned. When they said the benediction, a bugler high in the dome of the Cathedral on one side played Taps, the universal signal that the day is over. There was a long pause. Then a bugler on the other side played Reveille, the military wake-up call.

It was Churchill's way of communicating that, death may be the end of this life it was also a beginning of something new. Ironically, there is little evidence that he was a born again believer. His desire for this at his funeral communicates a greater truth than he might have been aware of.

Because Jesus is the resurrection and the life, death to the believer may be represented by down here, but it just might be true that reveille is played at the same time in Heaven. The day is done here, but a new day is beginning there.

The fact that Jesus died, was buried, then come out of His own grave, very much alive proves His words are true. **When He brought Lazarus out of the grave that was a resuscitation.** He simply bring the same man from death back to life. **But when He came out of that grave it was a true resurrection.** What's the difference. Lazarus came back to life in the same corrupted body that would ultimately die again. When Jesus came back to life it was in a new body that would never die. I don't want to be resuscitated. I want to be resurrected.

3) Jesus has authority over life and death

Jesus broke up every funeral that he attended, including His own. First person to come back from death permanently. He holds the key to resurrection and that includes what happens to me. All will be resurrected one day to either enter eternity in Heaven or be banished to eternity in Hell. Who makes the difference? Jesus. My faith in Him will result in His bringing me into Heaven. Without it I would spend forever in Hell.

The important fact that no one wants to talk about is that even with all the breakthroughs in technology, the **death rate** has remained **exactly** where it was 100 years ago, 1000 years ago----**a flat 100 %**.

So, the most important issue of your life, is not how do you prolong your physical life? But how do you ensure your eternal life?

To paraphrase evangelist D.L Moody.

One day you will read that Johnny Hutchison, of Jonesboro, AR is dead. Don't you believe it. At that time I will be more alive than I have ever been.