

John 11:17–27

¹⁷ So when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days.

¹⁸ Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles away.

¹⁹ And many of the Jews had joined the women around Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.

²⁰ Now Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him, but Mary was sitting in the house.

²¹ Now 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 of God, God will give You.”

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 at the last day.”

²⁵ Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.

²⁶ And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?”

²⁷ She said to Him, “Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.”

“I AM the Resurrection and the life” John 11:17-27

INTRO:

Now we come to the central reality the coming miracle will demonstrate. The whole of this paragraph leads into one of the great **“I AM”** statements in the **Gospel of John**. ***“Jesus said to her, ‘I AM the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?’”*** **John 11:25-26** While this is our destination in this text, our Lord had John include this truth in the center of this narrative.

I. Setting the Scene (verses 17-19)

II. The Discussion with Martha (verses 20–27)

I. Setting the Scene (verses 17-19)

“Therefore, when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles away. And many of the Jews had joined the women around Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.”

A. Although the pronouncement in the second point is the ultimate goal of this account, John encased it in an historical account. To understand this, we need to remember last time when Jesus heard Lazarus was sick He did not drop everything and come to them. Instead, specifically because He loved Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, He waited two days to go.

B. There are two essential things we need to know about the situation. John wrote first, ***“Therefore, when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days.”*** This was not an accidental reality. It was by design. Second, ***“Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles away. And many of the Jews had joined the women around Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.”***

Many of our Lord's unbelieving enemies will be there to see His miracle. However, Jesus stated the central truth before the miracle happened.

II. The Discussion with Martha (verses 20–27)

“Now Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him, but Mary was sitting in the house. Now Martha said to Jesus, ‘Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You.’” John 11:17-22

A. Martha's first words are a statement of fact and a declaration of her faith. The fact as far as Martha understood it was the Lord Jesus did not arrive in time to save Lazarus.

1. Some think that Martha could not really have this kind of real faith because she seems to lack this level of faith later in this conversation.
2. Finding someone who just had a loved one die, it is not surprising to find a person full of assurance at one moment and doubting at the next. Martha was hurting. Still, she clung desperately to who Jesus was and is.

B. The Lord comforted Martha by trying to underline an important spiritual truth.

“Jesus said to her, ‘Your brother will rise again.’”

1. When a believer dies, it is vital we not lose sight of the Lord's promise. Those who die in Christ will rise again.
2. However, Martha understood this resurrection as a far off event. In fact, she understood that a resurrection day was coming and was already marked on God's eternal calendar.

“Martha said to Him, ‘I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.’”

While this was and is true, there was much more that Martha needed to understand.

C. The Lord provided a comforting truth in **verses 25-26**.

“Jesus said to her, ‘I AM the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?’”

1. Jesus said to her. Resurrection is not just a day. It is a Person. Life is not an event. It is a reality connected to who Jesus was and is and what He would do.

2. What does this mean? It means we need to understand both sides of the two resurrections our Lord spoke about in **John 5:23**.

“Truly, truly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live.”

This is what happened when the Lord saved us. The other resurrection is found five verses later in **John 5**.

“Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.” John 5:28–29

3. Our Lord then described the impact of this important truth. First, for Lazarus and others like him who had passed through physical death, ***“He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.”*** Although, in a physical sense, Lazarus was dead. In fact, he was right then alive in the very presence of God. Remember when Jesus talked with the Sadducees about the resurrection, He closed the discussion with this amazing statement. **Matthew 22:31–32**

“But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.”

A second text we need to remember is found in **2 Corinthians 5:6-8**.

“So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.”

Now also consider **1 Thessalonians 4:14**.

“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.”

4. Second, Jesus applied this to everyone who is alive.

“And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. [into the age]”

The Lord was not talking about physical death. Rather, our Lord meant spiritual death, eternal separation from God for all eternity. The life our Lord Jesus gives is a life we have right now which will never ever end.

5. Finally Jesus asked Martha if she believed this. Her response is one of the great professions of faith in the Bible.

“She said to Him, “Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.”

Where are we in view of this reality?

1. First, we need to be sure of our own faith in Christ. Do we believe all that Jesus said to Martha? Have we trusted in Christ alone to save us?

2. Second, can we believe this for our loved ones who have died in the Lord? Are you sure heaven is real? Do you really believe that although our loved ones are gone, they are not dead but alive in the Lord and with the Lord?

3. Finally, what difference has our faith in Christ made in how we live today? Leading into **2 Corinthians 5**, the Apostle Paul made three statements.

“Therefore, we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

Are we living with eternity in view?

Hymn# 213 Because He Lives