

## **Jesus the Resurrection and the Life**

John 11:25-26 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

<sup>25</sup> *Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; the one who believes in Me will live, even if he dies, <sup>26</sup> and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?"*

### **Introduction**

A recap of the sermon series on Jesus' identity so far: Jesus is the Bread of Life. He is the First and the Last. He is the Light of the World. He is the Good Shepherd.

This morning, we are going to listen to Jesus who said, *"I am the resurrection and the life."*

### **Content**

The word 'resurrection' appears 40 times in the Bible. All references are found in the New Testament. No appearance in the Old Testament. Though infrequent in number, the word 'resurrection' carries a divine message with eternal weight. It assures us that this life is not the end. It gives us hope of resurrection. It reminds us that we will be resurrected in the presence of God to be with Him forever and ever.

*Points:*

### **Christ is the Resurrection.**

Let's consider Christ's claim. No one in the world has ever made such an outrageous claim. He says that He Himself is the Resurrection, not just a resurrection, but **THE** Resurrection! Concerning His claim on resurrection, we have two choices. Either call Him a liar and a lunatic, or He is the resurrection as He claims, therefore, divine, because no human ever resurrected.

As far as I am concerned, I made up my mind. I believe in Christ's integrity. I believe that He tells me the truth, and that He is the resurrection, and He will raise me from the dead. Furthermore, when it comes down to resurrection, Christ is an expert. He is the author and giver of resurrection. Do you understand this truth? Is Christ indeed resurrection to you? Or, are you reluctant to believe that truth same as the first century believers who didn't believe in resurrection of Christ until they saw the risen Christ face to face?

### **Jewish Understanding of Resurrection**

Let me explain to you how the disciples in the first century understood Jesus' statement that He is the Resurrection and the Life. Their understanding on resurrection was shallow at best. In fact, none of them had much exposure to the word, *resurrection*, until they heard it from Jesus (they didn't celebrate Easter every year ☺). Therefore, they were ignorant of resurrection or unfamiliar with the concept of 'coming alive again' after physical death. Many Jewish folks believed that, once you die, nothing awaits you on the other side. Besides Pharisees, many priests considered the idea of resurrection absurd.

*Remember Jesus' conversation with the Sadducees? (Matthew 22).* The religious leaders despised the concept of resurrection as nonsense. Before they witnessed Jesus' resurrection, Christ's own disciples were not much different. They didn't have a clear understanding of resurrection, either. They were even afraid to ask Him about it: One day Jesus was teaching His disciples in private regarding what was going to happen to Him. He told them, "*The Son of Man is to be handed over to men, and they will kill Him; and when He has been killed, He will rise three days later.*"<sup>32</sup> **But they did not understand this statement, and they were afraid to ask Him.** (Mark 5:31-32). The disciples were saddened with the thought of losing their Master. Gripped and scared with the idea of Jesus' being killed, *they totally missed the resurrection part.* Only after they witnessed Christ's resurrection with their eyes, they remembered Jesus' teaching was true.

Let's go back to Christ's claim that *He is the resurrection and the life.* Unless Jesus knows everything about resurrection, He would not make such a claim. Resurrection and life dwell in Him. He knows everything about resurrection and life. Therefore, if you want to know anything and everything about resurrection, go to Him, research in the Bible on His words and examples on resurrection, and you will find the answer. Christ will show you and explain to you everything that is entailed in resurrection, both His own and yours.

That's exactly what I did in the Bible. I have checked out Christ's track record in resurrection: during the 3 years of His public ministry, He raised the dead: the widow's son of Nain (Luke 7:11-17), Jairus's daughter (Luke 8:40-56), and Lazarus (John 11:1-44). Later, He was raised from the dead. In fact, Christ was the first one who rose from the dead (the first fruits, the Bible calls). He was the first one who destroyed the power of sin on the cross through His own death. He also nullified the power of death by rising from the dead. The power of death that reigns over all mortals cannot overcome the resurrection power in Christ.

And He promised to raise all the dead at the end. The power of raising the dead is in Him. He is the Resurrection and the Life.

**We Will Never Die.**

Christ's own resurrection confirms the truth that we too will be resurrected from the dead like He was. Listen to Him one more time: <sup>25</sup> Jesus said to her (Martha-*kc*), "I am the resurrection and the life; **the one who believes in Me will live, even if he dies,** <sup>26</sup> **and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?"**

Let me repeat what He said: *The one who believes in Me will live, even if he dies. And everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die.*

Let's ponder the first sentence: **the one who believes in Me will live, even though he dies.** What's that mean? It means that the believers will live again, even though they physically die. God will raise the believers who have died in Christ. They will come back to life again. Well, that's how most of us understand resurrection. That's what I also say in each memorial service. Resurrection awaits us.

What about the second sentence? **Everyone who lives and believes,** (like you and me who are alive today), **will never die.** We humans are mortal, that is, everyone dies, at one point of time or another. But because of faith we have in Jesus, Christ declares, we will **never die.** Did you hear what He says? **Will Never Die?! How is it possible? Does it mean that our heart never stops beating?** Well, not exactly. Here's one way to explain it.

His perception on 'physical death' differs from that of ours. While we call 'physical death' death, Jesus doesn't call the 'physical death' "death." Instead, He calls it "sleep." If someone is physically 'dead,' to us, he is 'dead.' However, to Jesus, he is 'asleep,' not 'dead.' And, at resurrection time, He will wake him up from 'sleep' like we all wake up after the night's sleep every morning.

Take an example from the Bible. E.g.1, One day, Jairus, the synagogue official, begged Jesus to come to his house and heal his daughter who was dying. While they were on their way to the house, <sup>35</sup> ... people \*came from the house..., saying, "Your daughter has died; why bother the Teacher further?" <sup>36</sup> But Jesus, overhearing what was being spoken, \*said to the synagogue official, "Do not be afraid, only believe." <sup>37</sup> And He allowed no one to accompany Him except Peter, James, and John the brother of James. <sup>38</sup> They \*came to the house of the synagogue official, and He \*saw a commotion, and people loudly weeping and wailing. <sup>39</sup> And after entering, He \*said to them, "Why are you making a commotion and weeping? **The child has not died, but is asleep.**" <sup>40</sup> And they began laughing at Him" (Mark 5:35-40). Did you hear Him? Jesus said, **The child has not died, but is asleep!** With which, people laughed at Him! I see here the clash between divine perception and human understanding. They pronounced she was 'dead,' and Jesus called, she is not. She is just

‘asleep.’ In the sight of the Almighty, human ignorance and arrogance know no bounds! Jesus raised her from the dead that day!

Another instance where Jesus also called a dead person, not ‘dead,’ but ‘asleep.’ “Now a certain man was sick: Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha... <sup>3</sup> So the sisters sent word to Him, saying, “Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick.” <sup>4</sup> But when Jesus heard this, He said, “This sickness is not meant for death, but is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by it”... <sup>6</sup> So when He heard that he was sick, He then stayed two days longer in the place where He was... <sup>11</sup> ... He \*said to them, “Our friend **Lazarus has fallen asleep**; but I am going so that **I may awaken him from sleep.**”<sup>12</sup> The disciples then said to Him, “Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will come out of it.”<sup>13</sup> Now **Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about actual sleep**” (John 11: 1-13). Once again, regarding our physical death, if we stop breathing and cease to be alive physically, in human eyes, we are dead. However, Jesus says, we are just ‘asleep,’ and He will wake us up in the presence of God. We will wake up in a new body, the resurrection body, totally different from our earthly body, which God prepares for us all. (2 Corinthians 5:1-5). I cannot wait until that day!

So, going back to His claim, everyone who lives and believes in Him, (like you and me today), will never die. (The real ‘death’ ---the Bible calls it ‘the second death’---comes to those whose names are not written in the Book of Life (Revelation 20:6, 13, 14. Revelation 21:4,8). This is another sermon topic for later.

In Jesus’ eyes, we are forever alive: yesterday, today, tomorrow, and forever. The moment when we stop breathing, we may be dead in people’s eyes, but not so in God’s eyes. We just fall asleep and in the time of resurrection, He will wake us up. Do you believe this?

## Conclusion

If there’s no resurrection, it means no one was ever raised. That means, Christ was not raised from the dead. It means, our faith is worthless and we are most to be pitied among all people, because we believe and preach a lie.

Christ has been raised from the dead, “*the first fruits of those who are asleep*” (1 Corinthians 15:20). Christ is our resurrection and life. He is the Lord of both the living and the dead: *For to this end Christ died and lived again, that He might be Lord both of the **dead** and of **the living**.* (Romans 14:9). In Christ, we do have resurrection and eternal life. Do you believe this? Amen.