

“I Am The Resurrection & The Life” (John 11:17-27)

A. **Background:** Lazarus, a friend of Jesus & the brother of Martha & Mary had died. Jesus was told that Lazarus was sick but waited 4 days to come to Bethany to his aid. Martha met Jesus on His way into town.

1. Let's put in a good word for Martha considering how she is often remembered; she was a woman of great faith in Christ.

John 11:21 – Now Martha said to Jesus, *“Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.”* – Prevent death.

John 11:22 – *“But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You.”* – Raise the dead.

John 11:24 – Martha said to Him, *“I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.”* – Resurrection day.

John 11:27 – She said to Him, *“Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.”* – Deity

[But the focus of our study is on what Jesus said in (11:25-26), & what those words mean?]

I. JESUS SPOKE OF LIFE & DEATH IN 2 WAYS

A. **Physical death** occurs when the spirit departs or leaves the body (Jas 2:26). *Physical life* occurs when the spirit first inhabits the body (Ecc 12:7; Zech 12:1).

B. **Spiritual death** occurs when the spirit departs or leaves the presence & fellowship of God.

Gen 2:16-17 – And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good & evil you shall not eat, for *in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.*”

- **What did God do when they disobeyed?** He sent them out of the Garden where they had been enjoying fellowship w/Him (3:23).
- **What is the significance of being sent away from the presence of God?**

Eph 4:17-19 – This I say, therefore, & testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, 18 having their understanding darkened, being *alienated from the life of God*, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; 19 who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

Isaiah 59:1-2 – Behold, the LORD’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear. 2 But *your iniquities have separated you from your God; & your sins have hidden His face from you*, so that He will not hear.

- That is why so many passages that refer to man’s sin also refer to his death (**Ezek 18:20**; **Rom 6:23**; **Jas 1:14-15**).
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1. *Spiritual life*, then, must occur when the spirit is united with God, the source of all life, in a common bond of fellowship – *that must be what Jesus was referring to*.

John 11:25-26 – Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection & the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die [physically], he shall live [spiritually]. 26 And whoever lives [physically] & believes in Me shall never die [spiritually].”

[When we have spiritual life, then we have a life that physical death cannot take away from us, we have continuous, unbroken fellowship with God if we continue to seek His forgiveness (**1 John 1:7-9**).

But this suggests a terrible possibility.]

II. A LIVING DEATH

A. It is possible to live physically while being dead spiritually.

1. We’ve already noticed that from the reading in Ephesians 4 & Isaiah 59, but it can also be true of Christians, which means that a child of God can sin & be lost.

1 Tim 5:6 (regarding widows) – But she who lives in pleasure is dead [spiritually] while she lives [physically].

Mark 11:25-26 – And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses. 26 ***But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses.***

2. When a *spiritually dead* person *dies*, he loses the only life he will ever have.

John 5:28-29 – Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice 29 & come forth -- those who have done good, to the resurrection of life [spiritual], & those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation [sp. death].

- a. What is “condemnation”? Endless, conscious suffering *away from* the presence of God: HELL or the 2nd death

2 Thess 1:7-10 – and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, 8 in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, & on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 *These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord & from the glory of His power*, 10 when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints & to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.

Mark 9:43-44 – If your hand (foot, eye) causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to *hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched* — 44 where ‘Their worm does not die & the fire is not quenched.’ Read [Rev 20:11-21:8](#)

[What will be the worst thing about hell?]

- It won’t be just the darkness & the tormenting flames.
- It will be the thought of being *eternally separated* from God.

What will be the greatest thing about heaven?

- It won’t be just the joy of seeing the people you have admired from the past (examples).
- It will be the thought of being *eternally* with God, & knowing that you never have to leave.

Now we can see the value of the promise Jesus made in ([John 11:25-26](#)).]

III. JESUS IS THE ONLY SOURCE OF SPIRITUAL LIFE

A. “**I am the way, truth, life** no one comes to the Father except through Me”! (cf. [John 14:6](#))

1. Jesus came to spare us from spiritual death by leading us into the presence of the Father who is in Heaven.

John 10:10-11 – The thief does not come except to steal, & to kill, & to destroy. *I have come that they may have life [spiritual], & that they may have it more abundantly*. 11 I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.

John 20:30-31 – And truly Jesus did many other signs [7 recorded] in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, & that *believing you may have life [spiritual]* in His name.

Gal 2:20 – I have been crucified with Christ; *it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives [spiritual] in me*; & the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me & gave Himself for me.

John 4:13-14 – Jesus... said to her, “Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, 14 but *whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.*”

John 6:63 – It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. *The words that I speak to you are spirit, & they are life.*

1 John 5:11-12 – And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, & this life is in His Son. 12 *He who has the Son has life*; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.

Rev 21:6-7 – And He said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha & the Omega, the Beginning & the End. *I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.* 7 He who overcomes shall inherit all things, & I will be his God & he shall be My son.

Rev 22:1, 17 – And he showed me *a pure river of water of life*, clear as crystal, *proceeding from the throne of God & of the Lamb*...17 And the Spirit & the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” And let him who thirsts come. *Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.*

Spiritual life begins & ends with Jesus Christ.

B. How does one partake in this spiritual life that Jesus Christ offers to the world?

1. Doesn't all life begin with a seed that germinates & results in a birth?

John 3:5 – Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, *unless one is born [again, vs. 3] of water & the Spirit*, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

1 Peter 1:22-26 – Since *you have purified your souls in obeying the truth* through the Spirit ... 23 having *been born again*, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, *through the word of God which lives & abides forever*, 25 *Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.*

Col 2:12-13 – buried with Him [Christ] in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. And you, *being dead in your trespasses...He has made alive together with Him, HAVING FORGIVEN YOU ALL TRESPASSES* {Spiritual life begins!}. **Rom 6:3-11**

Col 1:14 – in whom *we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins*

2. When we obey the gospel, we gain *spiritual life* & our names are added to “the book of life” (**Phil 4:3; Luke 10:20**); anyone not found in it is cast into the lake of fire (**Rev 20:15**).

C. How can we know that Jesus is the resurrection & the life?

1. The Talmud (Rabbinical writings on their law & traditions) contained a superstition that the spirit hovered around the body for 3 days.
 - a. Now Jesus didn't believe that, but He waited 4 days to go to Bethany. —His reason (11:4).
2. Jesus worked miracles in the *physical* realm to prove His power in the *spiritual* realm.
 - a. "I am the Bread of Life" (John 6:10-13, 35); "I am the light of the world" (9:5-7).

John 11:25-26 – "*I am the resurrection & the life*. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. 26 And whoever lives & believes in Me shall never die"

How did He prove this?

John 11:43-44 – Now when He had said these things, *He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!"* 44 And he who had died came out bound hand & foot with graveclothes, & his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Loose him, & let him go."

John 2:18-19 – So the Jews answered & said to Him, "What sign do You show to us, since You do these things?" 19 Jesus answered & said to them, "*Destroy this temple, & in three days I will raise it up.*"

[Jesus is indeed all He claimed to be. He has proven Himself to be "the resurrection & the life" for those who believe & obey Him.]

IV. WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO US?

- A. We can GRIEVE in hope; when a faithful Christian dies we need not "sorrow as others who have no hope".

1 Thess 4:14, 16-17 – For if we believe that Jesus died & rose again, even so *God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus...* 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, & with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 *Then we who are alive & remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.* And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

B. We can face DEATH with hope.

Heb 6:13-20 – For when *God made a promise* to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, *He swore by Himself*, 14 saying, “Surely blessing I will bless you, & multiplying I will multiply you.” 15 And so, after he had patiently endured, *he obtained the promise*. 16 For men indeed swear by the greater, & an oath for confirmation is for them an end of all dispute. 17 *Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel [promise], confirmed it by an oath*, 18 that by two immutable things [*promise & oath*], in which it is impossible for God to lie, *we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us*. 19 This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure & steadfast, & which enters the Presence behind the veil [HEAVEN], 20 where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of...

1. God made a promise to Abraham – AND God cannot lie – then God made an oath to keep His promise to Abraham.

a. Why did God do that? He did it not only to show Abraham that He intended to keep His promises, but “to show more abundantly to the heirs of the promise [that’s us] the immutability of His counsel” (Gal 3:26-29).

2. Heaven is a promise is anchored by Jesus our forerunner, who is currently in Heaven.

C. We can face LIFE with hope.

1. We are not abandoned; we are not alone; the Lord is nearby (Phil 4:5).

2. His ears are open to our prayers (1 Pet 3:12).

3. We are born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus...to an incorruptible & undefiled inheritance... (1 Pet 1:3-4).

4. He offers abundant continuous life for the soul (John 10:10) – Because He is:

a. High Priest (Heb 8:1-2)

b. Mediator (1 Tim 2:5) – a reconciler, a go-between man & God

c. Advocate (1 John 2:1) – a consoler

d. Intercessor (Rom 8:34) – one who pleads

5. Through flesh, Jesus became like us; that we through faith, might become like Him!
THAT IS SPIRITUAL LIFE!

CLOSING

- A. **Did you ever notice** that Martha & Mary said the same thing when Jesus came to Bethany?

John 11:21, 32 – Now Martha said to Jesus, “*Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died*”... 32 Then, when Mary came where Jesus was, & saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying to Him, “*Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.*”

1. They probably spent those days waiting on Jesus saying, “If Jesus were only here...”.
2. But as strong as their faith was, a Gentile Centurion had greater faith! (**Luke 7:1-9**).
- a. “Say the word & my servant will be healed.”

[That’s the kind of faith & trust it takes to be a Christian.

We must know that Jesus does NOT have to be physically present to rule the events of this life (**Matt 28:18; Eph 1:20-23; 1 Pet 1:22**).

And He does NOT have to be physically present to grant us the forgiveness of sins & spiritual life from His high & exalted place in Heaven at the right hand of the Father (**John 11:25-26; Heb 5:9**).

Jesus said, “Do you believe this?” Then we should do as He commands (**Mark 16:16**).

But He is also the resurrection as much as He is the life.

Col 3:1-4 – If then you were raised with Christ (**2:12-13**), seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For you died, & your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 **When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.** (**1 Cor 15:50-58**)
