

I AM the Resurrection and the Life

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[0:00] Take your Bibles this morning and open them, if you would, to our text, or at least the focal text, to begin with John chapter 11 and verse 25.

Where Jesus said to her, that is to Martha, he said, I am the resurrection and the life.

He who believes in me, though he may die, he shall live. All right? And once again, we have here what one of Jesus' bold statements about himself.

A statement that clearly identifies his royal person and his redeeming purpose. He said, I am the resurrection and the life.

I am. That identifies his royal person as the great I am. He said, I am the resurrection and the life. And that identifies for us his redeeming purpose.

[1:29] The resurrection and the life. And I say to you that this is a bold statement and one that would have surely invoked a hostile response by his enemies.

That is, if they had been there to hear it. Because, you see, this statement is made not in the presence of his enemies. Unlike the previous statements that we have looked at, the I am statements, Jesus makes this one to a close personal friend.

To Martha. And Jesus, you know, he had some close personal friends, didn't he? And we know that he had these friends because at the center of this story in John chapter 11, we have, I would say, some of his closest friends.

Mary, Martha, and their brother Lazarus. And so apparently Jesus spent a great deal of time with his family there in Bethany. It was kind of one of his favorite stops, favorite retreats.

They're very close to Jerusalem. And so they were very special to him. And you know the story. Here in John chapter 11, Lazarus had become critically ill.

[2:40] We don't know what his illness was. But it was serious, right? Evidently serious because it was life-threatening. And we know, if you remember the story, that it did eventually take his life.

And so if you are Mary and Martha and Jesus is one of your close personal friends, as he was to them, then what are you going to do when one of your relatives becomes deathly ill?

What are you going to do? Well, you're going to send for Jesus, right? You're going to try to get a note to Jesus, you know, just like Mary and Martha did.

You're going to get a note to Jesus. Jesus, Lazarus is sick. He's dying. Come quickly. That's exactly what you and I would do. And that is exactly what Mary and Martha did.

And, of course, Jesus came right away, didn't he? Well, not exactly. We would expect him to. But if you know the story, you already know he did not.

[3:46] And you might just look there at verse 6. We're going to read the larger text here in just a moment. But in verse 6, it says, So when he heard that he was sick, that is, Lazarus was sick, he stayed two more days in the place where he was.

I remember when I read that the first time, I thought, how odd. It's not what I expected to read. Is it what you expect to read? Jesus heard that Lazarus was sick.

We know that he heard, got the news, did get the message. Mary and Martha sent the message.

And we know that Jesus did get it. And it says there in verse 6 that when he heard about it, he didn't go right away.

Now, I think this is quite strange. Don't you think so? I mean, what's going on here? How do we explain this? Because in verse 3 of chapter 11, it says that Jesus knew Lazarus was sick.

Verse 6, or verse 5, rather, it says that he loved Lazarus. I mean, he loved him with a very special love. And then in verse 6, as I read a moment ago, it tells us here that Jesus heard about Lazarus and that he was sick and that he did not come right away.

[5:04] And how do we explain this? You know what would happen to the typical Southern Baptist pastor if he discovered or God knew that one of his members was ill, any kind of ill, and waited two days, literally four days, actually, before going to visit with that sick one of his members?

You know, what would happen to that Baptist pastor? I'd say the deacons and the elders would be having a secret meeting, and one that they did not invite the pastor to. And, well, you know how it would go.

And so at first glance, this is strange, isn't it? And it really gets stranger. If you'll look at verse 14 in John chapter 11, look at it.

Then Jesus said to them plainly, Lazarus is dead and I'm glad. Well, I know I stopped at kind of an unusual place, but it does mean that.

Jesus did say, I'm glad. I'm glad what? I'm glad that he's dead. Literally, that's what he means. I'm glad for your sakes that I was not there. If he had been there, he would have healed Lazarus.

[6:12] And so the implication is that Jesus was glad that he was not there to heal Lazarus. And so, translation, he's glad that he was dead. That's really what it says.

Now, he goes on to say that you may believe. Nevertheless, let us go to him. All right, so how do we explain this? What's this all about? Well, in the first place, by the time the messengers found Jesus, you need to know this from the text, and you can see it.

It's pretty clear if you read between the lines and do the math. We understand that by the time the messengers found Jesus to give Mary and Martha's message to him about Lazarus being sick, by that time, Lazarus was already dead.

He was already dead. Now, Jesus knew that because he is God. And we know that he knew it because he says there in verse 14 very plainly, he says, Lazarus is dead.

And so, to put this together, to put the math together, at the moment when Lazarus died, Jesus was two days' journey from Bethany, Lazarus' hometown, and he waited two days before starting that journey.

[7:19] And so Jesus got the message, waited two days, traveled two days, and when he got there, Lazarus had been dead for four days. Now, that's important.

That's significant. Now, I know we are looking at this great declaration, this I am declaration of the Lord Jesus Christ. He said, I am the resurrection and the life. And to understand that, we need to understand what's going on in the story, that statement, or that is wrapped around this great statement.

And so he waited four days. It was crucial. It was crucial that Lazarus be dead four days before Jesus arrived.

It was crucial. Because, you see, Jesus had every intention of raising Lazarus from the dead. That was part of the divine plan here.

And the story that transpires around it is just something that was orchestrated by God, predetermined by God to happen, so that the story itself could reinforce and illustrate the truth about Jesus, not only his royal person, but his redeeming purpose.

[8:37] And so Jesus, it was in the divine plan for him to raise Lazarus from the dead, and not just simply to heal him. And I would say to you that if he had raised Lazarus any time before the fourth day, it would not have been viewed as a miracle.

Did you know that? It seems that the Jews of Jesus' day had a certain belief about death. They believed that when a person died, that person's spirit would come out of the body, but it would hang around there for a while, for three days, actually.

And in a sense, the spirit or the soul of that dead man or woman hanging around, that soul would be looking to reenter the body, to see if the body was going to revive, and so that the soul could reenter the body, and the body would be resuscitated, and so the spirit would hang around for three days.

This is what the Jews believed in this day. Hang around there for three days, trying to reenter the body, but on the fourth day, the decaying process would be in full swing, and the soul then would depart, and then that person would be genuinely dead, or viewed as genuinely dead.

And so if Lazarus had come back to life within three days, it would not have been a miracle. See? Simple. But if Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead on the fourth day, that would have been viewed as a bona fide miracle by the Jews of the day.

[10:19] Now, Jesus had an even more significant reason for letting Lazarus die than just simply to validate a miracle.

Because, you know, Jesus did not perform miracles to wow his crowd. It wasn't just simply to impress them, so that they would come to the conclusion, wow, this is a genuine miracle. Jesus waited four days to perform a miracle for a more significant reason. Jesus was no show-off. He had a divine purpose. In fact, every miracle that you read about in the New Testament, in the Gospels, was performed for a reason.

It had a divine purpose behind it. Usually, I would say, and supremely, to glorify God the Father, first and foremost.

But secondly, it was used, the miracle was intended to validate Jesus' Messiahship. To validate his true identity as Messiah.

[11:27] He performed miracles for that reason. And thirdly, we could attach this reason, this divine purpose, and that was to teach a spiritual truth.

And I would say that the latter of these three is what we have here primarily. Certainly to glorify the Father. It certainly did validate the identity, the true identity of the Lord Jesus Christ, because he said, I am, I am the Messiah.

But it was primarily to teach a spiritual truth. So let's get back to the story. Jesus does finally arrive in Bethany. And so let's just follow the story along, starting at verse 17.

You would follow along in your Bibles. And so when Jesus came, he found that he, that is Lazarus, had already been in the tomb four days.

Been in there four days, and I explained why that was important. Now, Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles away.

[12:31] Now, I think John includes that information to reinforce what we've already been told or discovered through the disciples, that it was a dangerous thing for Jesus to return that close to Jerusalem.

That's where the hotbed of his enemies lived. In fact, remember, Thomas said, well, let's go with him, and so we'll die with him. So it was a dangerous thing for him to come that close to Jerusalem. And so it was two miles away, and since it was, verse 19, many of the Jews had joined the women around Martha and Mary to comfort them concerning their brother.

Close proximity to Jerusalem, and apparently because Mary and Martha and their brother Lazarus were very well known, maybe wealthy, maybe a prominent family, many, says many, doesn't tell us how many, but we know it was a bunch, a bunch of Jews, left Jerusalem, traveled the two miles, short little distance, to be with the family, and it says to be around them, around Mary and Martha, and that was the custom of the day.

The mourning process would last, officially last about 30 days. They would spend seven days there at the tomb. And then they would go home, and the family would sit, and the mourners would gather around them, and that's the scene here.

[14:08] I would say to you, and some have suggested, and I think it's true, that since this was a part of God's designed purpose here, this raising, ultimately raising Lazarus from the dead was a part of his purpose.

He's teaching his spiritual truth, and so he needed to have some people there to witness this. And so, God, by his providence, he caused many Jews to be there.

Some would be followers, probably friendly toward Jesus, and many others would be his enemies. And they were there, many of them, around Martha and Mary.

Then Martha, it says here in verse 20, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him. But Mary was sitting in the house, and that would be the custom.

Mourners would be sitting. Now, Martha said to Jesus, Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.

[15:15] And that would be true enough, wouldn't it? If Jesus had arrived early enough, he no doubt would have healed Lazarus, and Lazarus would be alive. And so, it's just a natural kind of question, and we know a little bit later that Mary asks the identical question, and so it's clear that they, Mary and Martha, have been talking about this together, and talked about it so much, and were wondering why Jesus didn't get there in time, and they had rehearsed this in their minds, and so they both ask the identical question, or make the identical statement.

But even now, she says, I know that whatever you ask of God, God will give you. not necessarily that God would raise Lazarus.

I don't believe at this point that Martha knew, or believed, or thought, that Jesus would actually raise Lazarus from the dead, because a little bit later, when Jesus says, take the stone away, what does Martha say?

Don't do that, because he stinks now. She wasn't expecting him to raise him from the dead. And Jesus said to her, your brother will rise again.

What did he mean by that? Well, obviously, because we know how the story ends, Jesus meant he's going to rise today. He's going to come back to life today. Did Martha take it that way?

[16:53] No. No. She took it a different way. Martha said to him, verse 24, I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.

So she's talking about the resurrection at the end of the age, which is true. True enough. We believe that. That there will be the resurrection of the dead at the end of the age.

And so, Martha, quite naturally, because she believed that, that was part of her theology, it certainly was what Jesus taught in his ministry, and she no doubt had heard him teach these things.

It is what, by the way, the Pharisees believed. Now, the Sadducees, they didn't believe that. That's why they were sad, you see. Okay. And so, it was common belief and it's taught throughout the Old Testament.

You can go to Job and Job believed that. And so, Martha quite naturally thought that Jesus was talking about at the end of the age and he said, Lazarus will rise again and she says, I know he will at the end of the age.

[17:58] And then Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life. That is, Martha, you don't understand.

The one who stands before you right now is the one and only source of resurrection power. The one and only source of eternal life.

I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me, though he may die, even if he dies, he shall live.

And whoever lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this? She said to him, Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.

Great confession of faith. Very similar to the one Peter made. Or will make. And when she had said these things, she went her way and secretly called Mary, her sister, saying, The teacher has come and is calling for you.

[19:06] As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly and came to him. Now, Jesus had not yet come into the town, but was in the place where Martha met him. Then the Jews who were with her in the house and comforting her, when they saw that Mary rose up quickly and went out, followed her, saying, She's going to the tomb to weep there.

Then when Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying to him, Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.

Now, you get this scene here. Mary and Martha have already spent time at the tomb. The mourners had come, the supporters, the ones who loved the family.

Many had traveled from Jerusalem. They were there with them there at the tomb. And then, as the custom goes, they went back to their home and they're sitting there and the mourners are there and they're around the family.

Some of them even paid to be mourners. Martha slipped out because she's always up and about and moving and that's just part of her nature and her character.

[20:18] Mary is still sitting. So they didn't pay that much attention to Martha when she went out but when Mary got up and went out quickly, they said, hey, she's going back to the tomb. Let's go there and help comfort her.

Now, I say that's part of God's design too because you see, God needed to get the mourners out of the house and down to the tomb where he eventually did get them.

And why did they need to be there? So that they could witness his great power, his resurrection power, the power of life itself.

It's all part of God's design. And so, Mary meets Jesus, asks the same question or says the same thing to Jesus as Martha had already said to Jesus and he said, well, verse 33, therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping and the Jews who came with her weeping, he groaned in his spirit and was

troubled.

He was troubled. And he said, where have you laid him? And they said to him, Lord, come and see. [21:34] And then, of course, the shortest verse in the Bible, verse 35, Jesus wept. Before going on, let's just point out a couple of things here. Mary was weeping and the mourners were weeping.

Again, some were paid to do that but they were doing a good job of it apparently and they were weeping and the word weeping there or translated weeping means literally to wail.

We're talking about crying profusely, wailing in mourning and in sadness. And then it says that after that and Jesus saw that he groaned in his spirit.

The word groaned is a word that means to snort like a horse. But what does it mean? It doesn't mean that Jesus was also distraught as Mary and Martha were and the mourners, the friends of the family were.

It doesn't mean that he was wailing. It means literally that he was peeved. That's kind of the best word I think I could come up with or he was really angry.

[22:52] Angry in his spirit. Why would he be angry at this point? He's looking and there's Lazarus. He's dead and he's buried there in the tomb and he looks and there's Mary and Martha and the Jews who had come to be a part of the mourners and they're all wailing.

And Jesus goes, See, he's actually angry. Why would he be angry? I think angry on the one hand because Lazarus is dead.

Not angry that he didn't get there in time to revive him or to heal him. Not angry that Lazarus was dead per se but angry that there is such a thing as death.

Angry at sin. And the result of sin is death and here is Lazarus his dear beloved friend and he's dead and there's only one reason why he's dead and it's because of sin.

And Jesus is angry at that. I think he's also angry and maybe primarily angry because he looks at these other friends of his and these mourners and they are they are wailing and weeping in such hopelessness like pagans people who don't have any hope and he groans in his spirit and he's troubled inside and he says where have you laid him and they said Lord come and see and then Jesus wept.

[24:23] Now this is a different word not wailing he's not wailing like them as people who have no hope his tears he's shedding tears and what a beautiful picture of his humanity again all of this is playing out and unfolding before us because Jesus is teaching going to reinforce with a real life event he's going to reinforce the truth that he is the resurrection and the life and he wept and then the Jews said see how he loved him and he did and some of them said could not this man who opened the eyes of the blind also have kept this man from dying well he could have but Jesus purpose was not to heal it was to raise and they did not understand that then Jesus again groaning in himself came to the tomb and it was a cave and a stone lay against it and Jesus said take away the stone and then we have Martha's objection

Martha the sister of him who was dead said to him Lord by this time there is a stench for he has been dead four days and Jesus said to her did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of the Lord by the way you know spiritually speaking seeing is not believing believing is seeing now he's not saying contrary to what some are teaching today that the resurrection or the raising of Lazarus was dependent upon her faith now that's not the idea what he's saying is those who believe that is it's only through faith that anyone is able to see the glory of God in this miracle the others are going to see a miracle but they're not going to see the glory of God because it's only by believing that you see that and that's what he's saying to her and he taught her this apparently at some time prior to this we don't have a record of it but he said didn't

I and I know that you always hear me but because of the people who are standing by I said this that they may believe that you sent me now when he had said this these things he cried with a loud voice Lazarus come forth he cried with a loud voice you think he had to speak loudly so the Lazarus could hear him I think it signifies his authority authoritative voice I think he did shout not so Lazarus could hear but everybody else could hear but it was a voice of authority and he said Lazarus and I think he mentioned his name because if he had not said

Lazarus I'm not just speculating I think this is true really do think! this is true! if he not spoken the name specifically because Jesus is the sole source of resurrection power then every dead body in the grave everywhere in the world would have been raised from the dead one day that will happen by the way in fact in John chapter 5 Jesus teaches us that John chapter 5 verse 28 he said 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 one of these days there's going to be that voice of authority come forth and all will be raised believers and unbelievers but for now it's just

Lazarus that needs to be raised and so he says his name in verse 44 and he who had died came out bound hand and foot with grave clothes and his face was wrapped with a cloth and Jesus said to him loose him and let him go then many of the Jews who had come to Mary and had seen the things Jesus did believed in him many believed that but some of them went away to the Pharisees and told them the things Jesus did or translation some believed many believed and some did not some did not it's a marvelous story and it's a story that is incredible an incredible miracle the resurrection of a man who's been dead four days that's an incredible miracle and an incredible story and there are a lot of ins and outs of it and turns of it that are quite interesting and so forth but all of it was orchestrated by a sovereign

[29 : 56] God so that not only would he identify his Messiah for those who would believe it but so that he could reinforce the truth that Jesus the Messiah is the sole source of resurrection and eternal life right now having looked at the story let's think this morning about what Jesus meant by the statement the resurrection and the life what is the significance to all of us here today but especially to some certain ones here today what's the significance of this statement I am the resurrection and the life well the key word here is the word life that's really the key word not to minimize the importance of the word resurrection Jesus is the sole source of resurrection power but the idea is life

I mean that is what resurrection accomplishes life the key word here is life and this of course is not talking about physical life though Lazarus was raised to live again physically later he would die but he would be brought back to life but the idea here of Jesus being the resurrection and the life is not physical life it's eternal life eternal life life as we understand from scripture life in the here and now as well as the here and the after and we'll get to that as we go along here so let's discover the truth in the text by asking it several probing pertinent questions we'll just ask the text questions first of all where must one go to get this life where must one go or maybe better yet or better said to whom must one go of course

Jesus right Jesus I mean he said I am the life I am the life that is I'm the source of eternal life and when he uses the word ego I me I am he is saying I am the one and only life one and only have you noticed as we have been looking at these great I am statements of Jesus have you noticed that life seems to be the central theme of every one of them really you notice that for example John 6 Jesus said I am the bread of what life he went on to say he that believes on me has everlasting there's that word again life in John chapter 8 Jesus said I am the light of the world he who follows me shall not walk in darkness but have the light of life there it is again in

John chapter 10 Jesus said I am the door if anyone enters by me he will be saved and then he went on to say I have come that they that is those who enter the door enter through Jesus I have come that they might have life we know that verse don't we not only that but he said that they may have it more abundantly super abundantly next Sunday Lord where Jesus said I am the way the truth and the life it is again there is life Jesus is life he is life believing on him is life knowing him is life following him is life real life and yet there are a lot of people today who think they have life a lot of people today think they are living living a lot of people apart from

Christ think they are living and why do they think that well some think that wealth is living I mean this is typical American that is that the accumulation of wealth or material possessions or maybe reaching a place of financial independence financial wealth that that's living right that's what a lot of people think they say this is the life some people think though it's not me but some people think that intellectualism is life that is advancing your mind and improving your mind through education and intellectualism they think that that is reaching a place of real life real living some think on a more basic level and think that recreation and entertainment is living don't you kind of think that sometimes when you get to take a little vacation and go to

[35 : 21] Branson you know go to Silver Dollar City like we did this last week and sit there side by side with your son and ride wildfire five six times this is the life but really the idea here is that some people have the idea they're living for more time to have recreation to have entertainment and so they work and that's not life but when they get home or get to go on a vacation and the more time they can have with entertainment or recreation that's living and if you can have more of that than you are living to the fullest some people think that some people think that family is living as

good as that is that having your family around you and being blessed by your family and spending time with family that that's living the more that you can do that the greater life is and in a sense that's true but in the long run eternal sense it's not true not really and there are many others who have discovered and are discovering that these things do not satisfy really the desire the innate desire the

God granted desire for real living and have discovered that these things do not provide that not ultimately because all these things can be lost even family can be lost and so many are still looking for life and life is knowing Jesus savingly and personally as Savior and Lord that's life he said I am the resurrection and the life you're not going to find it anywhere else I am the life and so let's ask a second question what must one do to have life that's a pretty important question what must one do to have life well on the one hand

Jesus has done it all certainly and those who enter into life through Jesus they discover that by and by but that's not the most pertinent answer to the question what must one do to have life and what did Jesus say verse 25 I am the resurrection and the life he who believes in me he who believes in me even though he dies though he may die he shall live believes in me verse 26 and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die that's pretty clear

Jesus is talking about faith right of course he is it's faith if you were to look at the Greek text there in verse 25 26 and look behind the English word believe it would be the Greek word *piscuo* some places in the Bible is translated faith some places in the Bible is translated trust here in John 11 25 and 26 it's translated believe all means same thing means all those things believing trusting faith faith see Jesus is talking about faith just like Paul was talking about in Ephesians chapter 2 verse 8 and 9 when he said for by grace are you saved through faith through faith and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God not of works lest any man should boast Jesus is talking about faith and faith is the one and only key that fits the door of salvation faith faith is forsaking all

I trust him faith is the hand of the beggar reaching out to take hold or receive the free gift of the king faith is turning the driver's seat over to Jesus saying Jesus you drive and I will go everywhere you go faith is the whole heart belief that what Jesus did on the cross he did for me he's talking about faith you now life is the subject life is what we're talking about in John 11 where must we go to get it to Jesus only Jesus what must we do to have it believe on Jesus and the third question how long does one get to keep this life well you should like the answer to this question one gets to keep this life forever!

[41 : 25] Forever! How would you like to live forever? When you really think about that you would say no I don't really want to live forever a lot of people would like to live forever at least it seems they would I'm sure back in Methuselah's day Methuselah lived 969 years I'm sure back in that day people were looking at Methuselah and saying is this guy ever going to die what I mean today we would be trying to discover in every way scientifically and medically and spiritually we would be trying to discover so that we can produce a product so that everybody could live as long as Methuselah lives is this guy ever going to kick the bucket I was in Branson this last week and driving down the street and there is a music show and it's Dick Clark's music show is Dick Clark ever going to die not that I want him to die but just forget that part is he ever going to he is a little bit lately he 80 years old now called

America's oldest living teenager how would you like to live forever a lot of people are attempting to do that live life longer or have longer lives and some are trying to do that through experimental drugs and different things like that some like to keep up the appearance of long life with multiple facelifts and tucks other places in the body botox and all that kind of stuff and on the bizarre side some are hoping to live even longer by having their bodies frozen when they die after they die so that maybe medical technology will advance to a stage where they'll find a cure for whatever killed them and then somebody maybe their family will unthaw them put them in the microwave or something like that and then they'll be healed people are doing that like poncelion who was looking for the fountain of youth and many are still looking for that fountain today well

I haven't found a fountain of youth but I have found a life that can never end if you're interested a life that can never end look at verse 25 look a little deeper there verse 25 he said I in the resurrection of the life he who believes in me though he may die he shall live he shall live I guess really what we ought to notice is what Jesus did not say he did not say he shall live again though that's true enough in a physical sense well in a spiritual sense it's true enough I mean there will be the resurrection so in that sense we understand that you may die but you live again certainly that's true

and that's good theology but that's not what he said here and so there's more to it than that Jesus said he shall live period period now what does he mean by that well he means that the one who believes in me even though he dies and by all appearance looks dead and is dead he is not really dead that's what he means he's not really dead we might say well whatever happened to old so and so and someone will say well he died but if he's a believer he didn't die not really don't misunderstand me I know death is a fact it's one of those undeniable facts death and taxes I know death is a real thing and from our earthly perspective and from our earthly experience human experience death is a reality and yet we must understand from what Jesus is saying here especially when he said I'm the resurrection and the life we must!

understand that there's something more real than what we can see with our eyes there's something more real than what we can experience in our physical bodies and and physical perceptions because the believer never dies that's exactly what Jesus said he never dies you think about that the next time you go to a Christian funeral you say well they look pretty dead to me we're just looking at the earthly body we're just looking at the created earthly fleshy receptacle that once contained the soul the life because immediately after death the believer is no longer in that body now it's not there anymore you see the believer is not asleep in that dead lifeless rotting corpse as some believe what

[46:40] Paul said in 2nd Corinthians chapter 5 he said if I had my druthers I'd go ahead and go right now literally I'd die right now so I could be with the Lord because to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord but he said it's more needful for you that I stick around because you need me and God wants to use me to help you but if I had my druthers I'd rather go right now anything Paul would have said that if he knew his theology was that after death the soul sleeps there in that body I can't think of anything very exciting about staying there in the grave asleep for 2,000 3,000 10,000 however long before Jesus comes again before the resurrection nothing exciting about that no Paul was excited he said if I die today I'm going to be with the Lord because to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord see but now one of these days though seriously at the resurrection of the saints these bodies are going to be raised these bodies are going to be changed in the twinkling of an eye from the corruptible to the incorruptible incorruption and that's good isn't that's all good stuff amen brother thank you but as good as that is the resurrection of the believer at the end of the age is not now repeat not the beginning of eternal life that's not the beginning of it the beginning of it is when you believe the Bible always speaks of eternal life after believing after putting your faith in Christ the Bible always speaks of eternal life in the present tense half

I might use the King James word half everlasting life you see begins when you're born again through faith in Christ that's when life eternal life begins that's when the source of resurrection power and life comes to take up residence in your life and that's eternal life here and now as well as here after and that life can never never never never end it can never end Jesus said whoever lives and believes in me shall never die never die do you understand that now I must ask one more question this morning as we draw this to a close and it's not really a question I want to ask of the text per se but a question that I want to ask you the text does ask the same question but here's the question when are some of you going to get this life

I ask this of some of you today I don't know who you are but when are you going to get this life I said that the text does ask the question and it's Jesus who asks it in verse 26 he said do you believe this he asked it of Martha he has just said I am the one and only source of resurrection power and life eternal and then he says do you believe me so I ask that question some of you here today I don't mean do you know about this I mean have you believed this have you responded in faith to this Jesus who is the resurrection and the life do you believe this some of you listen to me if you do not know for certain that if you were to die today that you would be going to heaven you don't know that have no assurance of it then would you just look at a word in this text just one word it is a word of invitation in a sense it is a word that reaches out of the Bible and lovingly beckons you it is a word that is defined maybe even empowered by the saving love of a gracious God and the word is whoever do you see it there whoever I'm sorry I like the King James whosoever same thing it is whosoever I say that's a word of invitation Jesus said whosoever lives and believes in me shall live shall live shall never die the great Charles Haddon Spurgeon said I am deeply in love with this word whosoever I read about a man who loved dogs and he had a lot of dogs he had big dogs and little dogs and he loved for his dogs to be in the house if they wanted to

be but he wanted them to have the freedom to go outside and come in and just go in and out as they pleased and so he he constructed two doors for his dogs a big door for his big dogs and a little door for his little dogs suppose anybody ever told him that one door would work for both any door that a big dog could fit through a little dog could fit through now the word whoever signifies a big door in what way a door door that sinners of every kind can enter big sinners little sinners young and old whosoever will may come come

I'm speaking to some of you today I don't know who you are did you know that the Bible ends with a great invitation to the unbelieving whosoever's it does Revelation 22 17 the Bible says in the spirit and the bride say come let him who hears say come and let him who thirsts come whosoever will let him take the water of life freely what an invitation not all will come will you Martha was one of those whosoever's and what did she say she said yes

[55 : 05] Lord I believe Martha believe I believe you Thank you.