

# RESURRECTION POWER

John 11:1-44



## SYNOPSIS

Death comes for us all, but the human desire to cheat death comes from a subconscious knowledge that death was not God's original intent for us. Death used to be final, the cessation of a reality. Even more devastating than physical death, the byproduct of sin was a second death, a second finality that we will be separated from God forever. In today's story about the raising of Lazarus from the dead, Jesus robs death of its finality. Jesus says, "I am the Resurrection and the Life." Do we believe this?



## OUTLINE

### 1 JESUS IS THE POWERFUL MESSIAH

Despite his deep love for Lazarus and his sisters, Jesus waits 4 days to visit the family. Despite real sorrow, he was clear in his purpose: to build his disciples' faith. (v. 15) The prevalent Jewish idea was that the soul would hover around the body for 3 days after death. Death was certain in Lazarus when Jesus appeared on Day 4, with no hope of revival. The Greek word for salvation (*sozo*) could also be translated as "rescue". When he called Lazarus out of the tomb, Jesus showed that he was the rescuer of humanity, not just from Rome, but from death itself. (1 Cor 15:26)

### 2 JESUS IS THE COMPASSIONATE MESSIAH

Mary's question to Jesus could be interpreted as, "Jesus, where were you?" Though he knew he would save Lazarus, Jesus wept as he entered into his friends' grief. The same is true today when he enters into our brokenness. God's heart is deeply grieved over how sin has ravaged his creation, even as he knows that he offers us salvation and resurrection. God leaves room for us to lament. He invites us to voice our pain and frustration, and he joins us there.. Infinite Power lowers himself to our eye level and tenderly asks if we will follow him, if we will let him rescue us. God's power saves and rescues. God's compassion invites us to trust in him and have relationship with the only one who can save and rescue.

### 3 "I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE"

Jesus makes hope possible beyond the grave. Even though we hate death, the devastation of disappointed hope makes it difficult to believe and pray for the reversal of sin's effects on the world (e.g. praying for the healing of a loved one).

Because our hope in Jesus is couched within the larger Hope of the resurrection, we can pray fervently for healing and supernatural rescue because we know that Jesus is ultimately victorious. The father of one of the Nashville victims said, "Through tears we trust that she is in the arms of Jesus who will raise her to life once again." Faith is not always a bold declaration; sometimes it is a whisper as we walk through the darkest valley. Jesus's question to Mary is a question for all of us: "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?" (vv. 25-26)



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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1

How do you feel about death?

2

Have you ever asked/wondered "where were you God?" What was the situation?

3

Have you ever experienced Jesus gently approaching you with an invitation to follow him, to let him rescue you?

4

Have you prayed for healing and not have it happen at the time? How did you respond? How do you wish to respond?

5

How could faith/hope in Jesus's absolute authority over life and death look like in our daily lives?



## BIG IDEA

Jesus is the Messiah, our rescuer who is both powerful and compassionate. He has robbed death of its finality and invites us to follow him out of our captivity to sin and its effects.

Jesus is the resurrection and the life. He is here to rescue us. Do you believe this? Is he your living hope?

