

I AM the Resurrection and the Life

Message 05 of 06 in the series: "I AM"

A. The God who created everything told Moses that His name is "I AM."

"Moses said to God, 'Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, "The God of your fathers has sent me to you," and they ask me, "What is his name?" Then what shall I tell them?' God said to Moses, '**I AM WHO I AM.** This is what you are to say to the Israelites: "**I AM** has sent me to you.'" God also said to Moses, 'Say to the Israelites, "The Lord, the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you.'" Exodus 3:13-15 (NIV)

Note: "I AM" is the self-existing source of all life in this world and the next. "Your mistake is that **you don't know the Scriptures, and you don't know the power of God**... as to whether there will be a resurrection of the dead—haven't you ever read about this in the Scriptures? Long after Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had died, God said, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' So, **he is the God of the living, not the dead.**" Matthew 22:29-32 (NLT)

B. Jesus repeatedly claimed to be "I AM" in the flesh, but almost nobody believed Him.

"In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. He existed in the beginning with God. God created everything through him, and nothing was created except through him. **The Word gave life to everything that was created... He came into the very world he created, but the world didn't recognize him. He came to his own people, and even they rejected him...** So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son." John 1:1-4a, 10-11, & 14 (NLT)

C. When His good friend Lazarus became seriously ill and died, Jesus used the opportunity to help His disciples really believe.

"A man named Lazarus was sick. He lived in Bethany with his sisters, Mary and Martha... So the two sisters sent a message to Jesus telling him, 'Lord, your dear friend is very sick.' But when Jesus heard about it he said, 'Lazarus's sickness will not end in death. No, it happened for the glory of God so that the Son of God will receive glory from this.' So although Jesus loved Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, he stayed where he was for the next two days. Finally, he said to his disciples, 'Let's go back to Judea.' But his disciples objected. 'Rabbi,' they said, 'only a few days ago the people in Judea were trying to stone you. Are you going there again?' Jesus replied... '**Lazarus is dead. And for your sakes, I'm glad I wasn't there, for now you will really believe.** Come, let's go see him.'" John 11:1-15 (NLT)

1. Jesus wants us to really believe He loves us even when it seems like He doesn't know/doesn't care what's happening to us.

"When Jesus arrived at Bethany, he was told that Lazarus had already been in his grave for four days. Bethany was only a few miles down the road from Jerusalem, and many of the people had come to console Martha and Mary in their loss. When Martha got word that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him. But Mary stayed in the house. Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died.'" John 11:17-21 (NLT)

Note: It's easy for us to lose confidence in God when He doesn't answer our prayers in the way or the time we think He should. "How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and day after day have sorrow in my heart?" Psalm 13:1-2a (NIV)

2. Jesus wants us to really believe He understands us even when we face death, grief, and pain.

"When Mary arrived and saw Jesus, she fell at his feet and said, 'Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died.' When Jesus saw her weeping and saw the other people wailing with her, a deep anger welled up within him, and he was deeply troubled. 'Where have you put him?' he asked them. They told him, 'Lord, come and see.' Then Jesus wept. The people who were standing nearby said, 'See how much he loved him!' But some said, 'This man healed a blind man. Couldn't he have kept Lazarus from dying?'" John 11:32-37 (NLT)

"He was despised and rejected—a man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief..." Isaiah 53:3a (NLT)

"...we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses..." Hebrews 4:15a (NIV)

3. Jesus wants us to really believe He is stronger than death because He IS life.

“Jesus told her, ‘Your brother will rise again.’ ‘Yes,’ Martha said, ‘he will rise when everyone else rises, at the last day.’ Jesus told her, ‘**I am the resurrection and the life**. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die. **Do you believe this, Martha?**’ ‘Yes, Lord,’ she told him...” John 11:23-27a (NLT)

Note: Talk is cheap. Jesus proved He is stronger than death. “‘Roll the stone aside,’ Jesus told them. But Martha, the dead man’s sister, protested, ‘Lord, he has been dead for four days. The smell will be terrible.’ Jesus responded, ‘**Didn’t I tell you that you would see God’s glory if you believe?**’ So they rolled the stone aside. Then Jesus looked up to heaven and said, ‘Father, thank you for hearing me. You always hear me, but I said it out loud for the sake of all these people standing here, **so that they will believe you sent me.**’ Then Jesus shouted, ‘Lazarus, come out!’ And the dead man came out, his hands and feet bound in grave clothes, his face wrapped in a head cloth. Jesus told them, ‘Unwrap him and let him go!’” John 11:39-44 (NLT)

“Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?’ For sin is the sting that results in death... But thank God! He gives us victory over sin and death through our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Corinthians 15:54b-57 (NLT)

Life Application: If we believe in Jesus, we don’t need to be afraid of dying.

“Because God’s children are human beings—made of flesh and blood—the Son also became flesh and blood. For only as a human being could he die, and only by dying could he break the power of the devil, who had the power of death. Only in this way could he set free all who have lived their lives as slaves to the fear of dying.” Hebrews 2:14-15 (NLT)

Life Application: We can trust God’s Word. We have all the evidence we need to believe in Jesus.

“**Many** of the people who were with Mary **believed in Jesus** when they saw this happen.” John 11:45 (NLT)

“...these (miraculous signs) are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.” John 20:31 (NIV)

“I tell you the truth, those who listen to my message and believe in God who sent me have eternal life. They will never be condemned for their sins, but they have already passed from death into life.” John 5:24 (NLT)

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Connect Group Questions:

Read John 11:1-44 and then discuss the following questions:

1. Who can you relate to most in this story (Jesus, the disciples, Martha, Mary, the crowd of mourners)?
2. Have you experienced the death of a loved one or a close friend? If so, how did you deal with the grief and pain? Who helped you the most during this painful time?
3. Does the Bible give you enough evidence for you to believe Jesus is the resurrection and the life? (John 20:30-31, 2 Timothy 3:16)
4. Why do you think Jesus stayed where He was for two days after he learned that Lazarus was sick? Share a time when you were frustrated with a delayed answer to prayer. (Psalm 13:1-2)
5. Why do you think Jesus wept at Lazarus’ tomb even though He knew He was going to raise Lazarus from the dead in a few minutes? (Isaiah 53:3, Hebrews 4:15)
6. Why do you think Martha objected to having the stone rolled away from Lazarus’ tomb when she had just said she believed Jesus is the resurrection and the life? Describe a time in your life when your faith has been put to the test?
7. In 1 Thessalonians 4:13, the Apostle Paul said he didn’t want believers to grieve the loss of their loved ones like those without hope. What do you think Paul meant by this? What hope do we have? (see John 5:24, 1 Corinthians 15:35-58, Revelation 21:1-7)

8. Discuss the following quotations:

“Death is no more than passing from one room into another. But there's a difference for me, you know, because in that other room I shall be able to see.” Helen Keller

“The LORD hears his people when they call to him for help. He rescues them from all their troubles. The LORD is close to the brokenhearted; he rescues those whose spirits are crushed.” Psalm 34:17-18 (NLT)