

Believing and Living

***Key Verse: “Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?”
—John 11:25, 26***

***Selected Scripture:
John 11:1-6, 11-15,
25, 26, 38-44***

JESUS PREACHED A RESURRECTION from the dead as an important part of God’s plan. During his earthly ministry he gave three examples of the work God plans for his kingdom. He raised Jairus’ daughter, who had died on her sickbed. (Mark 5:22-24,35-43) He interrupted a funeral procession in the city of Nain, and restored the dead son of a widow to her as he was enroute to be buried. (Luke 7:12-17) The last example involved a dear friend, Lazarus, the brother of Martha and Mary of Bethany, where Jesus was often a guest.

Our Lord was traveling beyond Jordan when he received a message sent by Martha and Mary that Lazarus was very sick. (John 11:3) He purposely delayed his return to Judaea so that Lazarus died. He then told his disciples that “Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.” (vs. 11) The disciples thought that Lazarus had taken a turn for the better. Then Jesus plainly told them, “Lazarus is dead.” (vs. 14) He was using sleep as an illustration of death because there is to be an awakening from death.

When Jesus came to the outskirts of Bethany, Martha went out to meet him, and said, “Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.” (vss. 21,22) “Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.” (vs. 23) Martha replied, “I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.” (vs. 24) He had taught Martha and Mary very well, and they believed that there would be a resurrection of the dead. This led Jesus to reply in the words of our key verse. When Martha was asked whether she believed what he said, her reply was, “Yea, Lord:

I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.”—vs. 27

Martha then went to get Mary. She came to Jesus and also expressed the thought that if Jesus had come, Lazarus would not have died. Jesus asked to be brought to the tomb where Lazarus had been buried four days earlier. He proceeded to raise Lazarus from the dead.

When Jesus said, ‘I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live,’ he was referring to his part in God’s plan for providing the ransom sacrifice to redeem all of Adam’s fallen human family. Those believing in the efficacy of that sacrifice will receive life. The Father has placed all this power in the hands of Jesus. (John 5:19-27) Thus, Jesus told the people “Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming when all who are in the tombs 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 judgment.” (vss. 28,29, *Revised Standard Version*) Those then that are brought back to life and believe on him in this time of judgment shall never die.

The understanding of the doctrine of the resurrection is what is meant by ‘believing’ and ‘living.’ The wonderful opportunity for all mankind to come to a knowledge of this great truth is promised by God in I Timothy 2:4.

Dawn Bible Students Association