

LIFE GROUP LESSON

I AM • Week of April 16

Introduction

What does Resurrection mean to you? How would you define it? Take a moment and reflect on this.

We have just celebrated Easter – the joy of our Savior and Lord being raised to life on the third day after His crucifixion. Then why do I, as a Christ-follower, so often go back to living life the same old way?... like there is no hope, no way around a difficult situation, like the problem or mountain in front of me is going to swallow me alive? Some of us are in a good place right now. Thanks be to God. Others of us are struggling. Certainly, we all acknowledge that there are times, when each of us must walk through the valley of the shadow of death.

In the Gospel of John, we hear Jesus say many times, *I Am* – for example, “I AM the bread of life..” (John 6:35). “I AM the true grapevine...” (John 15:1). “I AM the gate for the sheep...” (John 10:7). “I AM the Good Shepherd...” (John 10:11, 14). “I AM the Messiah” (John 4:26). These *I AM* sayings of Jesus are a clear indication that at certain points in His public ministry, He announces (proclaims) His deity. There were times in Jesus’ ministry, such as when He heals a leper, He said, “Don’t tell anyone about this...” (Matthew 8:4). Yet now, as Jesus approaches the mission for which He came, He boldly declares:

“I am the light of the world. If you follow me you don’t have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life... For I know where I came from and where I am going, but you don’t know this about me... Since you don’t know who I am, you don’t know who my Father is. If you knew me, you would also know my Father... You are from below; I am from above. You belong to this world; I do not. That is why I said that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I AM who I claim to be, you will die in your sins” (John 8:12, 14, 19, 23-24).

Background

Jesus has twelve disciples; Jesus has followers; and Jesus has followers who are also great friends. True friends who are there for Him even as hostility by the religious leaders in Jerusalem heightens. Martha, Mary, and Lazarus are close friends who love Jesus very much. And Jesus loves them. Why then, does the Lord intentionally remain ‘where He was’ for two more days after hearing the

news of Lazarus’ serious illness? Perhaps you are asking – ‘Lord, why are you not coming to rescue me?... I am in deep trouble... do you not see me, do you not love me?... Lord, why do you stay so far away?’ – you are not the first one. As we read John, chapter eleven, step into the story, find answers. Hear Jesus say, “I AM the resurrection and the life!” Pray now for insight and understanding as we read.

Read John 11:1-44

1. What is the Holy Spirit saying to you?

What do you need Jesus to resurrect in you, your life, your marriage, your family? Name it. Write it in the space below.

2. What are you going to do about it?

“Lazarus’ 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” (v4). Two chapters earlier in John’s Gospel, in response to the disciples’ question about the reason for a blind man’s condition, Jesus says something similar: “This happened so the power of God could be seen in him” (John 9:3b). Let’s think about this: your sickness (your problem, your pain, your broken heart) will not end in death. Whatever you are facing today, God is aware. Ask the Lord to open your eyes to see that this is for the glory of God. In faith, say: “Lord, I trust you. I want you, the Son of God, to receive glory from this” – and believe. Thus, the first thing to do is simply invite Jesus into your heart – that includes your life’s mess, your condition, your challenge, your past-present-future – *all* of you.

3. How can we help you?

The message this weekend reminds us that resurrection is not an event. Resurrection is a Person, the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus tells you what He told Martha: “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?” (vv25-26) Thus, the second thing we need to do is make Martha’s words our response to Jesus. Even now in faith say: “Yes, Lord, I have always believed you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the One who has come into the world from God” (v27). Though it may seem that Jesus is delaying, that timing is off (even wrong), that all is out-of-control, and whatever-is-

swallowing-you-alive *stinketh* – Jesus has the power to roll away the stone and command life to come forth. Do you believe?

“Didn’t I tell you that you would see God’s glory if you believe?”

In Closing

We must understand all Scripture points to Christ. In the Garden of Gethsemane, Temple guards and a group of Roman soldiers came to arrest Jesus; Jesus asked them: “Who are you looking for?” They responded, “Jesus the Nazarene.” When Jesus said, “I AM he” the soldiers and guards ‘all drew back and fell to the ground’ (see John 18:1-6). *I AM* is the name God revealed to Moses when He appeared to Moses in the burning bush: “I AM WHO I AM. Say this to the people of Israel: I AM has sent me to you. ... the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you. This is my eternal name, my name to be remember for all generations” (Exodus 3:14-15). In Mark, chapter twelve, when Jesus was approached by Sadducees, who not only questioned Jesus’ identity and authority but refused to believe in the resurrection, Jesus said: “Your mistake is that you don’t know the Scriptures, and you don’t know the power of God” (Mark 12:24). Do you know the Scriptures? Do you know the power of God? He *is* the God of the past, present, and future. Jesus goes on to say—

“But now, as to whether the dead will be raised—haven’t you ever read about this in the writings of Moses, in the story of the burning bush? Long after Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had died, God said to Moses, ‘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. You have made a serious error” (Mark 12:26-27).

When sin entered the world, death entered the world. There is nothing we can do about sin and death. But Jesus can! This is the GOOD NEWS – the Gospel – Jesus has defeated death and the grave; covered (atoned for) our sin. Do you believe this?

Close in a Time of Prayer asking:

How can I pray for my fellow Life Group participants this week?

One Year Bible Reading

Apr. 16: Joshua 13:1-14:15, Luke 18:1-17, Psalm 85:1-13, Proverbs 13:7-8

Apr. 17: Joshua 15:1-63, Luke 18:18-43, Psalm 86:1-17, Proverbs 13:9-10

Apr. 18: Joshua 16:1-18:28, Luke 19:1-27, Psalm 87:1-7, Proverbs 13:11

Apr. 19: Joshua 19:1-20:9, Luke 19:28-48, Psalm 88:1-18, Proverbs 13:12-14

Apr. 20: Joshua 21:1-22:20, Luke 20:1-26, Psalm 89:1-13, Proverbs 13:15-16

Apr. 21: Joshua 22:21-23:16, Luke 20:27-47, Psalm 89:14-37, Proverbs 13:17-19

Apr. 22: Joshua 24:1-33, Luke 21:1-28, Psalm 89:38-52, Proverbs 13:20-23

I AM

Text: John 11

Plain Truth:

**By _____ in Jesus as _____
we have _____, by denying Jesus we
remain in _____ and _____.**

**1. _____ is not an _____, it
is a _____.**

**2. _____ didn’t just come to show us how to
_____, He came to give us _____.**

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