



DATE: March 7, 2010

TEXT: John 11: 17- 44

TITLE: “John XXIX: I am the Resurrection”

Who is Jesus? Let me say this..... I spent the first 17 years of my life not really caring who Jesus was. I have to admit, when I was a child Jesus was primarily a term of disgust.... Jeez was an expression I used all the time.... until my Grandfather yelled at me and then.... not out of respect for Jesus... but out of respect for my Grandfather I stopped using the term. I joined the church when I was 12 or 13.... as I have said before, I have no memory of it.... I did not care who Jesus was. I guess, if I was asked at that time, if I believed in Jesus I would say yes.... but then I would move on in the discussion and not think about Jesus again.

My wife read me a quote from *C.S. Lewis* in the book Screwtape Letters she had the book so I will paraphrase

**The path to hell is a smooth, well paved road. There will be no bumps, no obstacles, no detours, just a smooth path to hell.**

Praise be to God... when I was at a young, impressionable age God put some bumps in my life. God put the total breakup of my family. God put the loss of my life long friends. God put a

serious injury. He mad me ask the question... Who is Jesus? I did not have any pat answers... I did not grow up in the church. I had no preconceived ideas... truthfully I had almost no ideas abut Jesus. I just had questions.

In our text this morning we are seeing a group of people who were asking the question: who is Jesus? We are seeing Martha, Mary and a large crowd, in a crisis situation, being confronted with Jesus. I have Good News... Jesus clearly answered the question... he clearly stated with words backed up by actions his identity. Let us see some of His answers.

**Answer # 1** Jesus is the source of life. *John 11:25-26* is one of Jesus' great statements..

**25**Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; **26**and whoever lives and believes in me will never die.

Jesus was talking to Martha, the sister of Lazarus. Jesus had just told Martha that his brother would "rise again." Martha gave the religious reply... this was the standard theological statement of the Pharisees (not the Sadducees). She said she knew here brother would rise "on the last day." But Jesus has a different plan... Jesus has a lesson to teach to Martha, Mary, the eye witnesses and to each and every one of us.

Allow me to share a quote that struck me when I read it this past week. It is from the

Preachers Outline.

**Here is a critical fact: Jesus did not say that he *gives* the resurrection and life to man, but He *is* the Resurrection and the Life. Jesus, of course, does give the resurrection and life to believers; but His point is not this fact. His point is far more important. Jesus declared that He is the very being and essence, the very power and energy of life. This is a phenomenal claim. It means that man—in fact all of life—exists only by the will and power of Jesus. Being the power and energy of life, Jesus is the Source of all life.**

If God would totally withdraw His presence from this planet, all life would cease to exist.

Jesus is the Resurrection. Jesus is life.

But Jesus does not stop there... he promises to give life to those who believe in Him.

Allow me to share three wonderful verses given to us by John that tell us about true life.

**John 10:10....The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. (Or abundantly)**

**John 11:25 ....He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; 26and whoever lives and believes in me will never die**

**1 John 5:12...He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.**

Do you see the wonderful promises of Jesus? He promises to give physical life. To give

Spiritual life, to give Eternal life, and to give abundant life.

Last Monday Kim and I were driving someplace and we were reflecting on the discussion

we had the previous night at the Dieter home. Kim asked me; “What would you say if someone asked you what benefits you have for being a Christian?” I had to think for a while. I said “Truthfully, I have been a Christian for so long now it is almost impossible to imagine life without Christ.... My answer would be... everything... all that I am... all that I have I see as a result of being a Christian....meaning... purpose... joy... abundance...everything.”

And the joy is this... this is but a foretaste of our eternal life in the presence of God. Look again at this verse from 1 John. Because of our surrender to Jesus Christ we have life... but there is also a negative.... if a person does not have a relationship with Jesus he does not have life. This points to this truth..... life in the eyes of Jesus is not just the beating of the heart. Of course everyone on this earth (who is alive) has a beating heart. But if you do not have Jesus you do not have real life. You have existence. You have physical life... but real life... abundant life.... eternal life... in only found in Jesus.

**Answer # 2** Jesus is a man who cares for each and every human being.

I began this sermon by stating that God placed me in a situation of needing to discover

who Jesus was. I truly remember hearing the gospel story ... I mean really hearing it.... as a Senior in High School. I remember having little problem believing that Jesus was God. I had little problem believing the miracles of Jesus.... but I struggled with the concept that God cared for me individually. How could the God of the universe care for little old me?

I looked through my very first Bible this past week. I turned to John 11. I underlined verses 25 .... but verse 34 I underlined and I wrote this comment in the column.... "Jesus was a man with feelings." I was blown away. Let me read this text to you... *John 11:33-35*

**33When Jesus saw (Mary) weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. 34"Where have you laid him?" he asked. "Come and see, Lord," they replied. 35Jesus wept.**

If you are ever asked in a trivia game what is the shortest verse in the entire bible answer John 11:35. Here is a question I asked myself this past week; Why did Jesus weep? I read three different Commentaries on this and got three different answers.

**First**, the most common thought is that Jesus was sorrowed by the pain of Mary and Martha. Jesus loved Mary and Martha. As we saw last week, in many ways they were more of

a family to Jesus that his birth family. His birth family rejected him... at least until after the Resurrection. Mary, Martha and Lazarus loved him and accepted him. Of course he knew he was going to resurrect Lazarus... but their grief and their pain was great and evident.. And this caused great pain for Jesus.

This was the fact that pushed me into the arms of Jesus as a senior in High School. I discovered, for the first time, that Jesus loved me... me....me. I did not feel loved or lovable... but Jesus loved me. You who have had the privilege to grow up in Christian homes may not recall a time when you did not know that Jesus loves you....you grew up singing “Jesus loves me this I know for the Bible tells me so” you believed it... that’s wonderful... but I did not.... I did not know or experience the love of God until I was 17 years old. When I cry... Jesus cries with me. When I rejoice, Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, rejoices with me. “Jesus loves ME this I know for the Bible tells me so.” Jesus wept... and continues to weep for you and for me.

**Second**, Jesus wept because of the hypocrisy and disbelief of the crowd. Verse 33 of our text tells us this... **(Jesus) was deeply moved in spirit and troubled.** The word “troubled here

could be translated as “angered.” The New American commentary states this....

**Jesus’ problem in this story, however, was not death. It was the mourners. Jesus was not a helpless human in face of death. I would maintain that Jesus’ weeping here is directly related to the failure fo his followers to recognize his mission as the agent of God. God’s Son was in their midst. They really missed the point.**

Why did Jesus weep.. Then and now? Because so many people fail to see the mission and purpose of Jesus. So many people fail to surrender to Him and therefore do not experience life....

this causes Jesus great sorrow and great pain. Jesus desires all men to come into his presence...

when individuals chose not to respond to the invitation of Jesus... he weeps **Third,**

another commentary stated that Jesus was weeping Because he knew what he was about to do.

He was crying Because, as a demonstration of his power, he was going to bring Lazarus back to

life... and he knew that Lazarus would not want to be brought back to life. . From the

perspective of Christians... we desire to be in the presence of God. *1 Corinthians 15 states*

**54When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory."**

**55"Where, O death, is your victory?**

**Where, O death, is your sting?"**

Do you have questions about this story... maybe we should go and ask Lazarus. Wait a

minute.... you say we can't go ask Lazarus because he is.... dead. You mean his resurrection was not a permanent solution... he still had to die.... again. Mary and Martha had to mourn his death... again. How long did Lazarus live after this story? We have no idea. He is never mentioned again.

Do you see this point... Lazarus was probably not too glad to be brought back to life.

Have you ever seen the movie "Big?" It stars I think Tom Hanks. It's the story of a boy who turns into a man. He discovers what it's like being a man... falls in love with a woman. He discovers a way to return to his childhood state... but he's in love. He asks the girl to go back with him.... she says... "I experienced adolescence once... I don't want to do it again."

Lazarus had to experience life and death again.... therefore Jesus Wept.

Which one is it... probable all three.... you can have more than one reason to cry... can't you.

Who is Jesus? He is life... He is the Creator.... he loves and cares for each and every one of us. I close with the words of Jesus....**He who believes in me will live, even though he dies;**

**26and whoever lives and believes in me will never die.** Belief brings life...eternal life.