

I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE

(John 11:17-27)

The good news of Christ's resurrection is not only our hope for future glory in heaven. It is also our only hope for our present life here on earth. To borrow words from a hymn, the resurrection of Christ is our "*strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow.*" Our Lord Jesus makes that clear to us when He declares, "*I am the resurrection and the life*" (John 11:25). The resurrection of Jesus is the timeless presence and power of Christ which brings the future blessing of eternal glory to a present reality in our life. As we celebrate our Lord's resurrection today, let's be encouraged by these three comforting affirmations about Jesus as our resurrection and life.

1. *Jesus* _____ *about our suffering and death.*

When Jesus arrived in Bethany, His friend Lazarus was already dead for four days (John 11:17-19). Struck with so much grief over the death of her brother Lazarus, Martha expressed her deep agony by telling Jesus, "*Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died*" (John 11:20-21). Our Lord Jesus showed His care to Martha through His ministry of comforting truth. Our Lord reassured Martha that her brother Lazarus would rise again because Jesus has the divine power to raise the dead (John 11:23-25). Though Mary did not fully understand what Jesus really meant, Jesus' words were more than sufficient to comfort her troubled heart (John 11:27). Jesus also reached out to Martha's sister Mary through His ministry of compassionate tears (John 11:28-35). "Jesus wept" is the gospel of Christ's pure love, compassion and care in two words (John 11:35). Jesus is our sympathetic God who is never aloof or distant from us whenever we suffer. He lovingly identifies with our afflictions and is always willing to bear our grief and sorrow (Isaiah 53:3-4; Heb. 4:15-16).

2. *Jesus can be* _____ *in times of suffering and death.*

Trust in God is such a struggle when we wrestle face to face with severe suffering and sorrowful death. Though Martha expressed her belief in Jesus' power to heal her brother and to spare him from death, she struggled to trust in the fullness of Jesus' divine power (John 11:21-22; Luke 7:1-10). In Martha's limited perspective, Jesus arrived too late to bring about the miracle that Lazarus needed. Martha had to be reminded that our Lord Jesus can be fully trusted at all times because He is perfectly punctual and precise in all of His plans, purposes and promises for His beloved people (John 11:4; Ecclesiastes 3:11; Galatians 4:4-5; Romans 5:6; Matthew 20:18-19; 28:5-6; Psalm 37:5,7, 39-40).

3. *Jesus* _____ *suffering and death for our good and His glory.*

Though Martha affirmed her belief in the final resurrection, she did not really grasp the full extent of Jesus' divine power (John 11:23-24; Daniel 12:2; Job 19:25-26). With a loving and gentle heart, our Lord Jesus graciously revealed to Martha the glory of His Messianic identity by declaring, "*I am the resurrection and the life!*" (John 11:25; 6:35; 8:12; 10:9,11; 14:6; 15:5). As the eternal, unchanging and almighty God, Jesus has the sovereign power to raise people from their graves and grant eternal life to those who trust in Him (John 11:25-27). As our risen Savior and reigning King, Jesus has victoriously conquered sin, suffering, Satan and death and has decisively secured our glorious salvation and resurrection unto eternal life (1 Corinthians 15:55-57; John 5:24,28-29; 6:40).
