

**Week Four: Who Is Jesus and What Does He Offer?**  
**Participant Sheet**  
**Session 5: Week of March 5, 2023**  
**I Am The Resurrection and the Life**  
*John 11:1-44*  
**Brewster Baptist Church, Brewster MA**

**Opening**

The raising of Lazarus is the most significant sign in John's Gospel that reveals Jesus' identity and his power. Read aloud in your group the "preview of coming attractions" that seems related to the raising of Lazarus as well as to resurrection in general that's found in *John 5:21, 25-29*,

*"Indeed, just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whomever he wishes. Very truly, I tell you, **the hour is coming** and is now here, **when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God**, and those who hear will live. For just as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself; and he has given authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man. Do not be astonished at this; for **the hour is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and will come out** - those who have done good, to the **resurrection** of life, and those who have done evil, to the **resurrection** of condemnation."*

**Key Verses: John 11:25-26**

*"Jesus said to her, **I am the resurrection and the life**. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"*

**Discussion**

Death is probably the most painful and difficult aspect of life to cope with and to face. In his grief at the loss of his children, Job says (*Job 17:7*), *"My sight has grown weak because of my sadness, and my body is as thin as a shadow."* (New Century Version)

*"There are times when God asks nothing of his children except silence, patience, and tears."*

*C.S. Robinson*

1. Have you ever experienced the sting of grief or the feeling that Martha and Mary did that if Jesus or God had been present your loved one might not have died? How did you deal with your feelings? How did this experience impact your faith?
  
2. Martha (who went out to meet Jesus, stands and speaks with him) and Mary (who sat at home, fell at his feet, and weeps) are examples of how each person will grieve in her or his own way depending on our personality and our relationship with the person who died. Have you experienced this reality in your own life or family when you have suffered a loss?
  
3. It must have been hard for Jesus to hear Martha and Mary lament his absence and their disappointed hope that he could have prevented their brother's death, "*Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died,*" (especially since Jesus delayed coming, knowing that Lazarus would die). Why do you think Jesus wept?
  
4. Women play a significant role in John's Gospel including the mother of Jesus (*John 2 & John 19*), the Samaritan woman (*John 4*), Mary and Martha (*John 11 & John 12*), and Mary Magdalene (*John 19 & John 20*). What does that tell us about John's Gospel and the faith community from which it came? What does it say to the church today?
  
5. Being a believer doesn't mean denying the very real loss we experience when a loved one dies. It does mean however, that we do not mourn in the same way as those who have no hope. *1 Thessalonians 4:13* says, "*But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope.*" How does our hope influence and impact how we grieve and go on with life?

6. How are you like Lazarus? How have you or do you need Jesus' help to be unbound and set free? The voice of Jesus calls us out from darkness and death into light, life, and joy. How has this happened for you?

In the face of the challenges of life and the mystery and seeming finality of death, Jesus says "***I am the resurrection and the life.***

*Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die.*

*Do you believe this?"*

**Prayer:** Creator God, the giver of life, when we are walking through the valley of the shadow of death, when the way is hard, when our hearts are weighed down by grief, loneliness, and loss, help us to journey on remembering that the pain we feel now is because of the love and joy that we shared before. Grant us the blessing and comfort of friends and family members to talk to, cry with, and to continue to share life with as we move forward. Thank you for the hope that we have in Jesus, the resurrection and the life, that encourages us to remember that death is not the end of our loved one or ourselves and that one day we will be in your presence in a way beyond our imagination and dreams. Amen.

**Some Resurrection Verses** for further reading and reflection.

*Luke 14:12-14:* He said also to the one who had invited him, "When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the **resurrection** of the righteous."

*Acts 4:1-2, 33:* While Peter and John were speaking to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came to them, much annoyed because they were teaching the

people and proclaiming that in Jesus there is the **resurrection** of the dead. With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the **resurrection** of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.

*Acts 23:6-7:* When Paul noticed that some were Sadducees and others were Pharisees, he called out in the council, “Brothers, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees. I am on trial concerning the hope of the **resurrection** of the dead.” When he said this, a dissension began between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and the assembly was divided.

*Acts 24:15-16:* I have a hope in God - a hope that they themselves also accept - that there will be a **resurrection** of both the righteous and the unrighteous. Therefore, I do my best always to have a clear conscience toward God and all people.

*Romans 1:1-6:* Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be the Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by **resurrection** from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name, including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ.

*Romans 6:5-6:* For if we have been united with him in a death like this, we will certainly be united with him in a **resurrection** like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin.

*1 Corinthians 15:12-14, 20-22:* Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say there is no **resurrection** of the dead? If there is no **resurrection** of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation has been in vain and your faith has been in vain. But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died. For since death came through a human being, the **resurrection** of the dead has also come through a human being; for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ.

*Philippians 3:10-11*: I want to know Christ and the power of his **resurrection** and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, if somehow I may attain the **resurrection** from the dead.

*1 Peter 1:3-5*: Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the **resurrection** of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who are being protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

*1 Peter 3:21-22*: And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you - not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the **resurrection** of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.