

# God's Promise – Life, Real Life

John 11:25–26

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On Resurrection – Easter we often take a look at one of the gospel passages. However, as Jesus lived His life He gave His followers reason to believe His promise of resurrection. The disciples went from confusion, to denial, and then a willingness to die with Jesus when they heard His promise. Then when Jesus died on the cross they had forgotten His promises, went away hiding.

When Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead the disciples were given another opportunity to believe Jesus promise to rise from the dead.

***John 11:25–26 (ESV) Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?”***

**Jesus is the only one who can raise people from the dead.** Good Friday and the crucifixion of Jesus meant the end of a dream. James and John, Peter and Andrew along with several other people saw their dream die on that Friday at noon. As Jesus breathed His last their hopes of God's anointed one, the Messiah died. Their dreams of His kingdom died. It was the end of great teaching and spectacular miracles. It was the end of healing miracles.

Nothing would ever be the same. They felt threatened, afraid, and lonely. They had given three years of their lives and lived it to the fullest. But it was over. How could Peter and John ever go back to making a living at fishing? How could Matthew go back to collecting taxes?

Jesus changed these men and now He was gone. They believed that God had sent Jesus. They believed the words He taught them about the emptiness of the rituals. They believed, they lived everyday with a fullness of life. Could they go back to their old religion? Could they trust what the religious leaders said? Those men put Jesus to death. Could they trust God and His promises again? Heartbroken, disillusioned, defeated and desperate they hid away in a room where Jesus had washed their feet. Life was meaningless and empty.

I don't know if I would have connected the dots between Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead and Jesus rising from the dead. You have to admit that's a big leap. Jesus truly had the power to raise Lazarus from the dead. They saw the man walk out of the tomb. Then they ate at his house just a few nights later. The thought of Jesus still having power once He was dead wouldn't cross the mind of any sane person. Dead is dead, Jesus might have been able to raise Lazarus, but how could He return to life? Rational people don't think that way.

Jesus had promised on many occasions that He would die and on the third day rise again. Over several months and in different locations, under various circumstances Jesus promised to come alive after dying. When He said it they looked at one another uncertain what it would mean. He said it so many times they a few of them offered to die with Him. He said it over again and there was the proclamation that they would never allow it to happen. Death is what they heard, but resurrection was beyond their comprehension.

Then Mary, one of the female followers, came running into the room out of breathe, shouting with excitement, it was hard to understand what she said: the tomb is empty, He is alive. Peter and John ran to the tomb. It was empty. How could it be? Where was Jesus?

***John 11:25 (ESV) Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live."***

**We have no idea about life and death and resurrection.** We think existing and surviving are life. We lie down in our beds at night recounting what happened during the day and planning for what needs to happen tomorrow.

We're consumed by what's it right in front of our eyes. We think that this is the only moment that matters. We get caught up in how every moment impacts our lives. Our lives are consumed by our own desires, thoughts, and emotions. We're like the disciples that walked with Jesus, we enjoy the blessings and become fearful when we think they'll disappear. Our lives are only about what's happening around us and to us. When all is going well we're swept along with the euphoria of the moment. When things turn soar where it's more like a flood drowning our thoughts.

Since this happens so often, we're beat down, jaded, cynical and joyless. We come to expect the worst in our situations and in people. We grumble about everything that happens, forgetting to see the benefits. Sometimes we wish it was all over.

This sounds depressing doesn't it? Where are the champions? Where's the fun? Where's the excitement, the thrills, the joy? You came here today expecting to be lifted up. You thought you would find some encouragement. You need a boost, right?

So much of our daily lives isn't fun, exciting, or encouraging. So much of our daily lives has been impacted by the power of sin. Hard work that's done with no pleasure, being used, abused, and disappointed. That's what sin has done to our world. Sin makes it impossible for us to stay connected to God. Sin brings about death.

We forget that death is either the end of suffering on earth or separation from God. Too many of us are walking around dead even though we're breathing. The reason for that is we've allowed sin to separate us from our creator. We're no longer connected to the one who breathed life into us. We're not able to make that connection on our own. If we aren't already dead, we're dying slowly. God is absent from our lives.

It doesn't matter if you're working hard without God in your life, you're missing out. You could have acquired great wealth and prestige, but if you don't have God you're short-handed. You might be the most likable person everywhere you go, but God isn't in your life and you know it. All the things you donate to others, the money you give away, the time you spend volunteering may make you feel good, but something is missing and it's God.

This is no life. This is death.

***John 11:26 (ESV) Jesus said, 'everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die.'***

**When you believe Jesus is the resurrection you will have life, real life.** The resurrection of Jesus provides us with an abundant life on earth. Every person who trusts in Jesus is given a new life.

When we trust that Jesus died as our sin we are forgiven. All that we have done in the past, the present and the future is cast as far as the east is from the west. All that you have thought, every grudge you have held, every fear you have experienced, every second you didn't trust God has been forgiven and forgotten by God.

When Jesus was nailed to that cross my sins and your sins were nailed there with Him. As you repent, turning away from your sins by turning to Jesus the blood He shed on that cross covers your sins.

Every person who trusts in Jesus is given a new life. The power of sin is overcome. So, during the daily battles a follower of Jesus has His power. As the temptations to sin come at you, Jesus is with you. As you contemplate returning to your old sins, Jesus' power is available. As you call upon Jesus, He will answer.

Every person who trusts in Jesus is given a new life. All of your sins were keeping you from becoming a Child of God. Your sin was stopping you from glorifying God. The sinful attitudes in your heart blinded you to honoring God. Your old way of life was not why God created you. But, through your faith in Jesus you have redemption from sin, you are a Child of God. You start to become the person you were created to be. You see the ways to honor God. You begin to glorify God with your words and your actions.

The resurrection of Jesus points us Heaven and eternal life. If Jesus is still in the grave then life is as hopeless, desperate and empty as I once described.

Jesus isn't dead, He is alive. Jesus isn't in the grave, He rose from the dead. Now, He has opened the gates of heaven to all who trust Him. Trusting in Jesus is the only way to eternal life in heaven. There is nothing you can do to earn your way into heaven. There is nothing I can do to get into heaven.

Trusting Jesus is the way to eternal life in heaven. There is a new sense of purpose when heaven is our goal. There is a new motivation when your sins have been forgiven. There is a new inspiration when your trust in Jesus turns into love for Jesus. Daily life has a direction that it never had before. Your deepest desire is to be near Jesus, to talk with Him, to listen for His guidance, to rely upon His power, to be encouraged by His grace, to be strengthened by His love.

Seeing other people struggle with their sin becomes a motivation that they would trust Jesus. Watching people drown in the power of sin inspires you to be a lifeguard, reaching out to rescue them. Walking alongside people who are burdened by sin, helping them cast it off is no longer troublesome for you. You have a new hope because you trust that Jesus died to forgive your sins and rose from dead to give you a new life.

***John 11:26 (ESV)***

***Jesus said, "Do you believe this?"***

**The only way to have a real life is to trust in Jesus.** Fire, brimstone, burning sulfur, and eternal suffering can be avoided. This is real simple: trust in Jesus and go to heaven. Don't trust Jesus and end up in hell. Nothing on this earth compares to hell. Fire, brimstone, burning sulfur, and eternal suffering make up hell. God is not in hell. For eternity hell is separation from God. That is death.

Everyone gets to make a choice. God created you because He loves you. Jesus died on the cross because He loves you. Jesus rose from the dead because He loves you. His love is all encompassing. His love forgives what we call the small sins, and what we think of as the big sins.

God's love for you has no end. The only thing that separates you from God's love is your choice to not trust Him. There is no power in all of the universe that is greater than God's love except your rejection. There is no condition or circumstance under the sun that is greater than God's love except your rejection.

Jesus saw you before you were born and He chose to die on the cross to take away your sin. Jesus saw you at your best and knew you still needed to be forgiven. Jesus saw you when you did your worst and He was ready to be nailed to the cross to redeem your soul from the power of sin.

Every person has to make the decision about their relationship with Jesus. Will your relationship be non-existent, strained, separated from Jesus? Will your relationship be real, genuine, and trusting in Jesus?

The weight of sin removed, the power to live everyday, and eternal life in heaven start the moment you call upon Jesus. Today, confess to Jesus that you are sinner in need of salvation. Repent of your sins and trust in Jesus.

If I'm wrong about this then I am a fool. If you're wrong about how you are living your life under the power of sin, then you are the fool.

It doesn't have to be death. You can have life, a real life, a new life by calling upon Jesus. The biggest barrier we have to trusting Jesus is our own pride. It is our desire to live the way we want. The greatest victory you can have is to trust in Jesus.