

## **The Gospel of John – The Seven “I am” sayings Session 5**

**“I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. ” John 11:25-26**

This is my favorite I am saying for two reasons.

- I see it giving comfort to grieving families at Celebration of Life services.
- I love how Jesus is comforting Martha and then Mary with his presence after their brother’s death.

To be clear, Jesus doesn’t resurrect Lazarus, he resuscitates him. Lazarus is going to die again so he was not resurrected. Once resurrected, there is no more death. In our Apostle’s creed we confess that we believe in the Resurrection of the Body. That will happen, according to scripture, on the last day. After that there is no more death.

The Pharisees are not happy with this particular saying of Jesus. After the raising of Lazarus we read; “From that day onward there was a plan afoot to kill him.” (11:53 NAB) Why were they so upset? When Jesus says, I am the resurrection and the life, he is asserting complete control over life and death. That job is reserved for God.

I find it fascinating that his chapter and the raising of Lazarus almost, almost parallels Jesus’ death and resurrection in chapter 20.

Both accounts have –

- A mourning Mary at the tomb (11:31 and 20:11)
- A cave tomb closed with a stone (11:38 and 20:1)
- Grave cloths plus a face cloth (11:44 and 20:6-7)
- A special role given to Thomas (11:16 and 20:24-28)

It’s almost as if chapter 11 was written to prepare the reader for chapter 20.

As significant as these parallels are it is interesting that this then isn't the last of the, I am, sayings. More to be revealed! This saying, more than the others, marks a turning point in Jesus' ministry in John's Gospel. In Matthew, Mark and Luke the authors make a dramatic climax of Jesus predicting his death and then he heads to Jerusalem for that to happen. John has none of that.

In John's Gospel, is not about following Jesus to the cross – although Thomas says that, sort of, in 11:16, "Let us go along to die with him." **In John it is about discovering who Jesus is, who sent him, to whom he is returning and what that relationship between God father and Son means to the believer.**

This theology is laid out in John 3:16-17, "Yes, God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him may not die but may have eternal life. God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him." We don't have to pick up a cross, deny ourselves, none of that. **We must believe that Jesus is God's Son.**

Next week's **I Am saying** is: **John 14:6 "I am the way, the truth and the life."**