

VICTORIOUS IN LIFE AND BEYOND

John 11:17 Then when Jesus came, He found him already being held in the tomb four days. 18 And Bethany was near Jerusalem, fifteen stadia away. 19 And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary in order to comfort them concerning their brother. 20 Then when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she met Him. But Mary was sitting in the house. 21 Then Martha said to Jesus, Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. 22 But I know that even now, whatever You will ask of God, God will give You. 23 Jesus said to her, Your brother shall rise again. 24 Martha said to Him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. 25 Jesus said to her, I am the Resurrection and the Life! He who believes in Me, though he die, yet he shall live. 26 And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?

There is something about life that each of us need to know, and that is life is full of trouble because of the fallen nature of the world. I have never seen anyone completely free of trouble; its either you are going through trouble, or you are coming out of one or about to get into one. Or there is one aspect of your life that is in trouble.

The issue is not whether trouble will come or not, the issue is when will trouble come (a student not passing as well as expected, someone being issued a termination letter at work, a breakup in a relationship, a car accident, a sickness in the body). I am not advocating for a pessimistic outlook to life, but I am simply wanting you to be prepared. The biggest question is this; when trouble comes who will be standing with you and by you. This morning, I want to talk to you on the subject matter **VICTORIOUS IN LIFE AND BEYOND**.

- The story of Lazarus is familiar with many believers and rightly so because many of us can relate with the story.
- This is a story of a brother who died – a brother who was greatly loved by his family and community.
- This was a helpless moment for the family – the family had many people around them but none of them could change the situation.

John 11: 19 And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary in order to comfort them concerning their brother.

- Death robs us of so much in our lives and it comes in different shapes and sizes.

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- The greatest death we all face, is death of the spirit - not having a relationship with God.

Romans 5:12 Therefore, even as through one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed on all men inasmuch as all sinned:

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

- Anyone born of a woman was born in sin and as such was born with a death penalty upon them.
- Over and above spiritual death, the devil has intentions of bringing death to whatever has your name on it.
- Many people die, not because it was necessarily their time, but the devil would have prematurely snatched their lives away.
- Some financial losses are orchestrated by the devil and his agents.
- Some material problems and difficulties can be traced to demonic activities.
- Some challenges faced by our children in their health can be the enemy fighting their destiny and future.
- Some unexplainable job losses are because of the enemy that intends to kill something in your life.
- Lazarus was dead for four days and had been placed in a tomb. Saints, a tomb is a picture of a situation that has reached its destination.
- Usually, a tomb was closed using a large stone, meaning that rarely would anyone go back into it.
- Tombs are full of rotting bodies and bones – in other words, when death has had its perfect work, all hope is lost.
- Mary and Matha were women of faith because when Lazarus got sick, the Bible says they sent a word to Jesus to come and heal him.
- What do you do when you are facing death in your life? The sensible thing is to do what these ladies did – call Jesus into your situation.

John 11:3 Then his sisters sent to Him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick.

- These sisters expected a quick response from Jesus. Yes, this is what people of faith should do, we should expect a quick answer from the Lord.

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- But what happens when the answer does not come quickly?

John 11:6 Therefore, when He had heard that he was sick, then indeed He remained two days in the place where He was.

- Many times, we don't understand the ways of God – like here, why would Jesus take His time?
- The glory of God is seen everywhere but more so when a situation looks impossible. Waiting long ensure that Lazarus was dead for sure.
- Jesus knew what He was doing because of what He had said earlier:

John 11:4 When Jesus heard, He said, This sickness is not to death, but for the glory of God, so that the Son of God might be glorified by it.

- He got to their house way after Lazarus had died – to be exact, Lazarus had been dead 4 days already.
- This time, Martha and not Mary was the first to be at the feet of Jesus – guys, desperate moments will change the lukewarm to be in hot pursuit for Jesus.
- The words that Jesus uttered changed the whole situation.

John 11:23 Jesus said to her, Your brother shall rise again. 24 Martha said to Him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. 25 Jesus said to her, I am the Resurrection and the Life! He who believes in Me, though he die, yet he shall live.

- Standing before Martha was not just Jesus their friend, Martha was standing before life itself. Who stands with you when death has visited your life changes your perspective of death.
- It is in that moment that Jesus utters some profound words. He told Martha that Lazarus was going to rise from the dead.
- Martha heard it but did not fully understand the gravity of the words – she went right past the present and all the way into the future. Her faith could not handle the fact that Jesus could raise Lazarus in the present.
- Her faith was good enough for the end of time resurrection and not in the now.
- Many people have faith but not for the now situation – the now situation is too traumatic to even believe for a change.
- Like Martha, you have been talking to Jesus about your case, but you don't fully comprehend who Jesus is.

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- What you know about someone determines your level of expectation and faith, it determines what you can receive and not receive from the person.
- Our faith malfunctions when we don't know the nature of the Jesus we are praying to.
- What did Jesus mean when He said, "I am the resurrection and the life?"
- Firstly, even before Jesus said anything – Martha was encouraged by the mere presence of Jesus. She was able to express her deepest felt need.
- Many times, we don't comprehend the magnitude of being in the presence of God and as such we don't make an effort to be in His presence.
- Martha rushed out to be with Jesus – when you are facing Jesus, your situation cannot remain the same. Make an effort to be with Jesus, where Jesus is found, be there as well.
- Martha had a limited view of Jesus when she said in *John 11:22* "But I know that even now, whatever You will ask of God, God will give You."
- She was of the view that Jesus needed to ask God the Father to perform miracles but no, she was missing the point – Jesus was God in the form of a man.
- Jesus changed that narrative by telling her that He was the resurrection and the life.
- It meant that He was the fountain of life and the very source of resurrection – this means that in Him dwelt the power to bring life to any dead situation.
- This was a declaration of great comfort to Martha because resurrection signifies a comeback or a return from death.
- It is an utterance of hope for all believers too!
- Jesus is the author of comebacks – it means that when you are praying to Jesus, there is a possibility of a resurrection, and you must have faith for it.
- Jesus is the source of the end of time resurrection and the source of today's resurrection for every dead situation in your life.
- When we say o death where is your sting, we mean it in the now and in the future.
- Yes, this body will die in the natural but there is resurrection coming – praise the Lord.
- Though we might lose money at some point, but there is resurrection on the way, though we may fail today, but we will rise up again on the 3rd day. He is the resurrection and the life.

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- You see, the power that raised Jesus from the dead is at work in you and through you right now.

Romans 8:11 But if the Spirit of the One who raised up Jesus from the dead dwells in you, the One who raised up Christ from the dead shall also make your mortal bodies alive by His Spirit who dwells in you.

- The actions of Jesus whilst on earth, confirms this great truth. On at least three occasions and in the presence of many witnesses, Jesus raised the dead.
- The case of Jairus' little girl – a life snuffed out too early.

Mark 5: 23 And he begged Him greatly, saying, My little daughter lies at the point of death. Come, lay Your hands on her, so that she may be healed, and she shall live. ... 41 And He took the child's hand and said to her, Talitha koumi; (which interpreted is, Little girl, I say to you, Arise!) 42 And instantly the little girl arose and walked (for she was twelve years old). And they were astonished with a great astonishment.

- Through a touch of His hand, Jesus brought back this little girl to life. There is nothing He cannot do. He did not say, there is not much of a loss because she is still young – resurrection power works for even the smallest of cases.
- The case of the young man at Nain

Luke 7:12 And drawing near the gate of the city, even behold, one having died was being carried out, an only son of his mother, and she was a widow. And a considerable crowd of the city was with her. 13 And when the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her and said to her, Do not weep. 14 And He came and touched the bier. And the ones who bore him stood still. And He said, Young man, I say to you, Arise! 15 And the one who was dead sat up and began to speak. And He delivered him to his mother.

- Here was a young man, taken by death in his prime time. He was his only mother's hope – a widow whose husband was dead too.
- Jesus had compassion on her, and the young man was brought back to life. Your dream is dying, it was your only hope for the future and hope – bring it before the resurrection power and it will come back to life.
- In all of these cases, Jesus demonstrated power over the last enemy, death. In the case of Lazarus, Jesus delayed His coming to make a point that even when death seemed to have had an upper hand, He was still more powerful.
- After death had reigned for four days, Jesus still commanded Lazarus to come forth.