

### ***Just as Lazarus was Raised***

*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?" She said to Him, "Yes, Lord; I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world." John 11:25-27*

In just a few words, the novelist, Charles Williams, summed up one of his characters: "He passed a not unsuccessful life in his profession; the only intruder he found himself unable to deal with was death."

Death most certainly is an intruder. People avoid talking about it, resent it as a fact of life, and fear its inevitability. This is the way death looked on the day that Jesus of Nazareth arrived in the little town of Bethany, where Mary and her sister Martha lived. A few days earlier, their brother Lazarus had lived there with them; now he was dead.

Remember? "Now when Jesus came, He found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off, and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them concerning their brother. So when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met Him, but Mary remained seated in the house. Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever You ask from God, God will give You." Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." 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?" She said to Him, "Yes, Lord; I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world" (John 11:17-27).

How we need Martha's confession of faith for our lives, too! Christ is all that real faith needs. He paid the price for our sins at Golgotha; He rose from the dead three days later, and now He lives in victory at the right hand of the Father.

In the Christ's declaration about Himself, all the half-faiths in the world, together with all the skepticism and all the fear that goes with them, have been brushed aside, once and for all. Martha knew this. In the Word of Christ, there is no make-believe, no beating around the bush. Death is recognized for what it is—for the enemy that it is. But then there is the Christ: the One who raised Lazarus from the dead is the same One who will raise those who believe in Him from death, too.

And so, family, now that the summer months have passed us by, let's not pass by those opportunities to strengthen our God-given faiths through Word and Sacrament ministry. We continue to have ample opportunities of assembly so that Martha's confession of faith would be ours too. And let's also never forget, Lazarus didn't raise himself!

Hence, Christians **worship** Jesus! They live out their baptisms **daily** and they partake of Christ's true body and blood **often**. And when HE calls them by name, they too will rise and live forevermore. Do you believe this? Then, I'll see you soon!

In Christ,  
Pastor Seehafer