

Jesus gently rebukes Martha when she says, **I know he will rise again in resurrection on the last day.** She is not wrong, but she is not right. She is faithful and confused even as you are.

She is not unlike you, holding to the true hope, expectation of the resurrection on the last day. But there is more to the promises of Christ than simply a future. He is present now, says, **I am the resurrection and the life.** Present tense. **Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die.** Present tense with a future consequence. Here and now! **Shall never die. Do you believe this?** Martha by the gift of the Holy Spirit confesses, **Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Christ.**

You know well what Martha and Mary were going thru. Unanswered questions, regrets over what could've been with loved one; oh what could be even now if they were here; even though we like Martha, believe we will see our loved ones again in heaven. Still we want answers as to why God lets this happen. Like Martha we present our problems before God -not really knowing how He can possibly solve our problems...Reality hits home, we realize the wages of sin is death. We are sinners. We are guilty.

No matter how many times our world tries to make it into a 'celebration of life', funerals show us that is all a lie. Death is the enemy. It robs us, it takes our loved ones away from us, leaves a hole. We daydream to think, would I rather want a sudden death or knowing it was coming in fatal illness. Does it really matter?

And we can't do anything about it. Oh, we could reach out and try to make amends before one dies, be there for our loved one, at their bedside, holding their hand. But there's nothing we can do. We're helpless.

Death destroys our hope, ruins our dreams and the times we wish we could have again. death is not normal or natural or acceptable.

Like the sisters of Lazarus we too wonder what might be different if God had intervened. **If you had been here, he would not have died.** And to hold them again. Worse -Jesus seems oblivious to us, to our questions, to our hurt and tears. He goes to wake up Lazarus; then claims this is an occasion for God's glory. What kind of glory?

At the bedside of a parishioner, their days coming to an end. Brokenness of mind, disease raged body; open their eyes one last time, to look and see, and confesses, Oh how Jesus loves me. Looks to family, I love you, and breathed their last here. And yet, they did not die. He is resurrection and life. His glory given. Death is not the end and our love in Christ and unto others has no end. **Yes Lord I believe that you are the Christ.**

That is the right answer, the only answer in all difficulties, sorrow, and temptation. **I believe that you are the Christ.** That is the right answer in confusion. "Do you believe that Lazarus, who is dead, is not dead? Do you believe that these evil things are for the glory of God into your life? And she says, **I believe that you are the Christ.**

That is the answer because it is the only thing that matters, the only thing that endures, the only things that is trustworthy. Jesus is the Christ.

You learn well from Martha not to excuse the evil of this world, but to simply say, **I believe that you are the Christ.** Somehow this will be good. I don't know how. I can't see it. But He is the Christ. You have a savior. Death itself will come to an end. Bodies are laid to rest, yet I believe you are the Christ and you declare they never die and are alive, while their bodies rest in the ground awaiting resurrection, reuniting with the soul already in paradise.

Repent of your despair over death of loved ones, of your mourning as the world mourns, of your own ideas how and when God should display His glory? Is it too much for you to realize that the love we have for another here on earth is no where near the love that God has for you, so also the hate that we have for death is no where near the hate that God has for it!

Your last enemy has been defeated. Your separation only temporary. In the end you will see His glory and realize that you haven't lost anything when you have eternity.

Christmas 1968, important time in history, the first time ever. An astronaut comes around the dark side of the moon, what no human had seen, takes a famous photograph of the earth, this blue marble amid the black of space, moon in foreground. Unrehearsed the astronaut gasped, **In the beginning God**. No science textbook or premortal slime can explain. **In the beginning God**. The whole dimension of eternity. The works of God displayed in creation and in our flesh, He who is resurrection and life.

If there's no eternal perspective, no Christ, how meaningless life becomes. What happens to the relationships you've cherish and enjoyed? How can you deal with things in this life? How can you go on from burying a loved one? what happens to love without an eternal purpose? **everyone who lives, believes in me shall never die**. The glory of God, His activity, His works displayed, living in you now and for all eternity.

May God keep this clearly in your heart and minds; whatever afflicts you – fear of death, regrets, despair of sins, sadness, loneliness- you are keep safe in His Word. Especially in your struggles, confused moments of life, confess, **Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Christ**.