



Lesson Title: The I Am's of John—I Am the Resurrection



Key Concept: Throughout the Book of John, Jesus used the Old Testament declaration "I Am" to reveal the different facets of his relationship with us. By revealing himself as the resurrection, Jesus provides hope beyond the grave.



Scriptures:

The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.
(1 Corinthians 15:26 *New Living Translation*)

²³ Jesus told her, "Your brother will rise again." ²⁴ "Yes," Martha said, "he will rise when everyone else rises, at the last day." ²⁵ Jesus told her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying.
(John 11:23–25 *New Living Translation*)

Context Scriptures: 1 Kings 17:17–23; 2 Kings 4:20–37; 13:20–21; Luke 7:11–17; 8:40–56; John 11:14–44; Acts 9:36–42; 20:7–12; Matthew 27:50–53; Genesis 1; 2; John 10:10; Job 18:14; Matthew 22:32; Mark 12:26–27; Luke 20:37–38; Psalm 23; 1 Corinthians 15; 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18; Isaiah 25:8; Hosea 13:14; Luke 20:34–38; 2 Timothy 1:10; Hebrews 2:14–15; Revelation 21:4



Lesson Thoughts:

The last "I Am" of this series was brought to the fore by a death, a universal occurrence since the Garden. This enemy of all humanity had struck within the circle of those close to Jesus. It appeared, despite others being raised from the dead, this common tragedy had triumphed at the core of those dearest to Jesus.

Lazarus's sisters agreed that Jesus had failed their brother. "He shall live," elicited a generic response to what must have seemed but a platitude. Their obtuse retort prompted a revelation far beyond this situation, or those of the other five people previously reclaimed from the jaws of death in Scripture. Each

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of the eight raised from the dead would again cross “death’s chilly waters.”¹ But within reach of these sisters was one who was “the Resurrection and the Life.”

Three people were raised to life in the Old Testament (1 Kings 17:17–23; 2 Kings 4:20–37; 13:20–21), three during Jesus’ ministry (Luke 7:11–17; 8:40–56; John 11:14–44), and two more in Acts (9:36–42; 20:7–12). Many of the saints also came forth from their graves at the time of the crucifixion (Matthew 27:51–53). But the true evidence that Jesus was both resurrection and life came when he, without word or touch from prophet, priest, apostle, or any other human, came back from the grave, never to die again.

These Bethany sisters made the unwise decision to put an expiration date on the power of God. They believed that Jesus could have spared their brother in what was now the past: “If only you had been here.” When Jesus made his promise of resurrection, their faith immediately leapt into the far future of the general resurrection, turning Jesus’ promise into some sort of limited-time offer. But they, as is often the case with us, had no faith for the now. Jesus’ “I Am” declaration covered all of time and eternity. Clocks and calendars are the King’s servants, not his masters.

The God and King who gave life (Genesis 1; 2) is well capable of restoring that which is stolen (John 10:10) by the king of terrors (Job 18:14). To God, who is the resurrection and the life, our physical death is somewhat irrelevant since in his sight we, like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, are always alive to him (Matthew 22:32; Mark 12:26–27; Luke 20:37–38). Even under death’s darkest shadows in that frightful valley (Psalm 23), we have hope beyond all physical evidence because we trust in him who is the resurrection and the life.

**Discussion Questions:**

- 1) Genesis 1 and 2 present God as the giver of human life. How does that impact the resurrection?
- 2) What is physical death? What is spiritual death?
- 3) How do you view the fact that Jesus—not you—has the power of life?

¹ Albert E. Brumley and Marion W. Easterling, “Standing by the River.”

Notes and Reflections

- 1) Read and contemplate 1 Corinthians 15.
- 2) Read and contemplate 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18.

Notes and Reflections, cont.