

## Session 2

April 21, 2019

### “YOU’LL NEVER DIE”

**John 11:25-27; 20:24-29**

What a wonderful day it is! While believers celebrate Christ’s resurrection every Sunday, there is something both beautiful and reassuring about Easter Sunday morning. Pity the poor soul who still wrestles with doubts and fears regarding eternal destiny. How can anyone go through this life and not wonder what comes next? Both common sense and intellectual reasoning point to some existence that lies beyond life in this world. Wise king Solomon said that God put eternity in our hearts (Ecc. 3:11). Job got straight to the point: “If a man dies, shall he live again?” (Job 14:14). Centuries later, Jesus gave him—and all of us—the definitive answer.

**The promise of the resurrection (11:25-27).** In the amazing miracle of raising Lazarus, Jesus not only demonstrated His power over death, but foreshadowed His own resurrection and promised ours. The scene is dramatic. From the chaos of the crowded Jewish mourning event, Martha went to meet Jesus as He arrived outside the town. Her extraordinary faith is displayed when she tells Him, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother wouldn’t have died. Yet even now I know that whatever You ask from God, God will give You” (vv. 21-22). Notice the scope of her faith; it covers the past (“if You had been here”), the present (“even now”), and future (“God will give”). Martha’s faith in the Scriptures is also evident when she testified, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day” (see Job 19:25-27, et al.). Jesus’ proclamation in verses 25 and 26 that He embodies both the resurrection and the source of eternal life is punctuated with the penetrating question, “*Do you believe?*” In fact, three times in these verses Jesus mentions life, and three times He mentions belief. Hence, every aspect of our salvation, from the forgiveness of sin, to the resurrection of the body is predicated on our willingness to believe.

**The perplexity of the resurrection (20:24-25).** While the idea of eternal life spiritually might be easy to accept, the whole concept of a resurrected body to go with it seems to be a problem. In fact, the apostle Paul dedicated an entire chapter in 1 Corinthians to addressing it! (1 Cor. 15). Job’s ancient question, “If a man dies, shall he live again?” seems to be alive and well in the mind of Thomas. Although the Bible is clear that all the disciples had their doubts (see Mark 16:11 and Luke 24:11), poor Thomas was the most vocal, earning him the nickname, “Doubting Thomas.” Yet his was not simply doubt, but downright skepticism. Notice that the proofs he required were very physical and very tangible (both touching and seeing), leaving no room at all for faith, which the Bible defines as “the reality of what is hoped for, the proof of what is *not* seen” (Heb. 11:1).

**The proof of the resurrection (20:26-29).** It’s noteworthy that the proof of the resurrection that Thomas requested is exactly what he got! Though the room was locked, the risen Christ appeared in the midst of the disciples. If that were not shocking enough, the Lord challenged the doubter’s doubts using the identical words he had uttered a week before. Thomas reacted in two distinct ways. First, notice that he did not follow through on his initial boast. To *see* the nail prints and to *touch* His wounds was no longer required. His focus was on the risen Lord! Second, the Doubter moved from a position of tangible, physical proof to one of fully submitted faith. His declaration

“My Lord and my God” (v. 28) is very important. Because it was uttered directly to Jesus, was accepted by Him, and fully affirmed by Him, this declaration stands as one of the Bible’s strongest indications of the deity of Christ. Hence we can have absolute confidence not only in a future resurrection, but in a present salvation.