



Believe

JOHN

MESSAGE

STUDY GUIDE

GROUP MATERIAL

SONGS

The Future is Now: Resurrection, Life, Judgment

Bible Reading: John 11:21-26, 38-44; 5:24-25, 28-29

SUMMARY: Jesus' raising Lazarus is a profound 'sign,' pointing to deeper truths. Martha, a devout Jew, firmly believed in the bodily resurrection of the dead on the 'last day.' However, God's intervention through Christ dramatically shifted her perspective. Jesus proclaimed, 'I'm the Resurrection and the Life,' bringing God's promises from the distant future into our present reality. John's Gospel contrasts with the Old Testament and the other Gospels as Jesus extends to believers the offer of eternal life, resurrection, and exemption from divine judgment in the present through faith. He boldly asserts, 'the coming hour is now here!' This means God's eternal life isn't a far-off future event but the immediate possession of believers. Resurrection commences today through spiritual rebirth, and they've already transitioned from death to life, standing acquitted by divine judgment. This is what baptism testifies. Christians can confidently lay claim to God's eternal life, the initiation of a process guaranteeing future bodily resurrection, and exemption from God's final judgment. Let's wholeheartedly embrace these promises, dispelling anxiety about our current status and eternal state, thereby transforming our lives today.

? John's Gospel is "described as 'a book in which a child can paddle and an elephant may swim deep.'" — Richard Burridge

I. Jesus' Raising of Lazarus is a Sign –What's signified?

II. Jesus: 'I am the Resurrection and the Life' (John 11:21-26)

- A. Jesus' challenges Martha's view
- B. Jesus is the Resurrection & the Life

III. Jesus' NT Revelation Versus Jewish OT concepts of 'the Last Day' (11:24)

- A. The OT: Resurrection Happens & Eternal Life Begins at the Last Day (Dan. 12:2)
- B. Resurrection: The Future ('an hour is coming') & the Present ('is now here') aspects
 1. The Future is Now—"An hour is coming, and is now here" (4:23; 5:25)
 2. Illustrated by Raising Lazarus

IV. The Future is Now—Eternal Life (3:36)

A. Eternal life in John—more than an extension of present life

1. Synoptics: Eternal Life inherited in the 'Age to Come'

2. John: Eternal Life begins now; its more than 'everlasting (human) life'

B. Eternal Life—the life of the Age to Come—granted now

• John “emphasizes the present: Christian believers receive eternal life now, in the present” –Anthony Thiselton

C. Eternal life is the believer's present possession (5:24)

D. Believers 'have passed' out of Death into Life (5:24)

• The “believers who already experience eternal life...must rise on the last day...Their new resurrection-life existence will be a ratification...of life & freedom from condemnation they already enjoy.” –D. A. Carson

E. Eternal Life & Eternal Security (6:54)

• Those “who believe already have eternal life. That eternal life continues after death through the believer's future resurrection from the dead.” –Troels Engberg-Pedersen

V. The Future is Now—Resurrection (5:25)

A. Lazarus—An 'Acted Parable of Christian Conversion'

B. You are Lazarus!

• “Lazarus is us, bound by death in our current lives ...Jesus stands at...our tomb, shouting 'Come out!' We are to

substitute our own name for... 'Lazarus,' hear his command, & walk into the light of day” — Alyce M. McKenzie

C. Christians have risen with Christ

D. Baptism testifies to this (Rom. 6:3-5)

VI. The Future in Now—Judgment (3:18; 5:24)

• “In a real sense, judgment has already taken place whenever anyone hears the gospel & responds ...in faith. Nowhere in John do we hear of a final judgment that will hold any suspense or surprises.” — Richard Hays