

You Will Live!

I've just returned home from serving a friend who has cancer. Unfortunately, it is incurable cancer. What do you say to the sick and dying? It's so hard to discern sometimes. You can't act like nothing is wrong, avoiding the inevitable conversation about death. On the other hand, you want to express hope. As the saying goes, "You can live one minute without air, but not a second without hope." Plus, there are cases where you pray and seem sure the person will live, and they die. In other cases you are sure they will die, and they live! I think these experiences properly caution us in steering away from a "one size fits all" mentality about sickness and the timing of death, and how we might respond in a given case.

This week's text from John 11 gave me something true and hopeful to say. Jesus proclaimed that His friend Lazarus' sickness was not "...unto death." But Lazarus did die, physically—even to the point of stinking. Yet Jesus also stated plainly that He is the Resurrection and the Life and those who believe in Him will live, even though they die. What hope did I relay from this passage to my friend with cancer? I told him that his physical sickness is not unto death because of Who Jesus is as our Resurrection, and who he is in Christ. Even if we die physically, he has power to resuscitate us, and that if he doesn't resuscitate us we will certainly be raised in Jesus, THE Resurrection of humanity Himself!

I told him that death in this passage doesn't have to do with biological or glorified human life. In Jesus we will all live, whether by resuscitation or Resurrection, and Jesus has made it so and will make it so! The question is this: Will we trust Him? If we embrace Him we will experience the Life he shares with his Father in the Spirit. If we don't trust Him we will most definitely not experience the life He shares with His Father in the Spirit, but rather death in that life. Seeing that Jesus is determined that we live, the question to Martha still stands, "Do you believe this?"

~ Tim Brassell