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# The Power of the Resurrection

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The resurrection of Jesus is the single most important truth of the Christian faith. The Apostle Paul put it this way:

*If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith.*

1 Corinthians 15:13-14 (NIV)

“On the third day the friends of Christ came at daybreak to the place Jesus lay, but found the grave empty and the stone rolled away. In varying ways they realised the new wonder; but even they hardly realised that the world had died in the night. What they were looking at was the first day of a new creation, with a new heaven and a new earth; and in a form of the gardener, God walked again in the garden, in the cool not of the evening but the dawn.”

G. K. Chesterton

The result: transformation built on an unshakable conviction that Jesus rose from the dead (Acts 2; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8).

## The Resurrection Really Happened

A great deal of evidence can be presented in support of Jesus' resurrection. But if we begin by believing that it is impossible for someone to rise from death, then we will be able to think of alternative ways to explain this evidence. Only if we are open to the possibility that supernatural events can occur, will we be able to consider the evidence with a more open mind.

*Eyewitnesses* - History is built on eyewitness testimony by ancient historians who are serious about their craft. The Gospel authors were writing in a similar fashion as eyewitnesses (Luke 4:1-4).

*Truth or Lie* - Would Christianity have taken off as quickly as it did if these disciples were saying things that their audiences knew were either exaggerated or false? They weren't lying because they were writing to an audience who was also there and this would have been disclaimed and seen as lie or fake news straight away.

*Women Witnesses* - In each Gospel account the first eyewitnesses at the empty tomb are women. In the ancient world women were not regarded generally as credible witnesses. If the stories of the resurrection were just made-up stories trying to convince gullible people about some higher truth, people would have never made up women as the eyewitnesses of the resurrection.

If we think, after examining the evidence, that the stories do ring true, then we need to ask whether we are willing to believe that Jesus actually rose from the dead. To accept that belief is not like accepting any other historical fact. It has implications for the way we live our lives. We may have to start looking at Jesus in a new way.

## **The Resurrection Changed Everything**

The early church believed that the resurrection was indispensable to their Christian faith. But why was it so important to them? If Jesus made it possible for us to have our sins forgiven by dying on the cross, what more did He need to do? What was the point of the resurrection?

The resurrection takes the Christian faith out of the realm of theory and into everyday living. Without the resurrection, the teaching of Jesus would simply be an interesting collection of stories, or a system of rules that we would find impossibly hard to keep. But because Jesus is alive, He challenges us to follow Him, and gives us the power to start living out His teaching ourselves.

The New Testament outside the Gospels talks about Jesus not as a dead and remembered teacher, but as a living person who still works through those who follow Him (Colossians 6:7).

To be a Christian is not just to believe in certain things - it is to know and love Jesus Christ.

The Resurrection changed history - we to this day, date human history by the life of Jesus who lived and died and was raised again.

## **The Resurrection Can Change Your Everything**

If it is true that the resurrection actually happened, we have to start thinking about Jesus differently. We can no longer think of Him merely as Jesus the imaginative storyteller, or Jesus the profound moral teacher. If Jesus has defeated death, He must be Jesus the Lord, who can give us confidence in a life with Him beyond death - and claim our loyalty and love in this life too. That is why it is vital to discover for ourselves whether the resurrection of Jesus took place or not. Our view of Jesus depends on it.

We all face this wonder of being born and then of having our lives come to an end.

*Every human being is appointed to die once, and then to face God's judgment. But when we die we will be face-to-face with Christ, the One who experienced death once for all to bear the sins of many! And now to those who eagerly await him, he will appear a second time; not to deal with sin, but to bring us the fullness of salvation.*

Hebrews 9:27-28 (TPT)

Are you waiting for him?

The death and resurrection of Jesus means that sin, your sin, is forgiven, that death, your death, is taken care of, that you can have hope, that you have a purpose, that you have a meaning that you have a message, that you have a destiny that love has triumphed over hate. Not just that. It means that creation itself is going to be redeemed, that suffering has been repealed, that every loss is going to be restored, that God himself will wipe every tear from every

sorrowing eye, that sickness and sadness and grieving and mourning and weeping will be no more. This moment will come. It will come because Jesus Christ has been raised from the dead! That's what we celebrate at Easter.

*God, I confess my sin and I repent, and I ask you to come in and forgive me as a gift of grace and be in control of my life. I ask that you fill me with your Holy Spirit so I can live for you the way you intended for me to live. Father I ask that you bring your resurrection power into my life.  
In Jesus' name, amen.*

If you prayed that prayer for the very first time then we would like to celebrate with you and give you a gift of a Bible to start you on your new relationship with Jesus. Please see one of our prayer team people and they will ensure you get our gift to you today.

## **Discussion Questions**

1. Share together your response to the story of the resurrection of Jesus as found in John 20:1-8; 19-23; 24-29.
2. Do you believe in life after death? Why or why not? On what do you base your opinion?
3. According to Paul as recorded in 1 Corinthians 15, why is the resurrection so important to Christianity?
4. If the resurrection of Jesus is true, what response according to Paul should a person logically give?
5. Where do you stand in accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour?