

EASTER SUNDAY

The Resurrection and the Life

Rob Rogers April 17, 2022

Introduction

We live in a world where there is **no lack of opinion** on any given issue. And everyone has a platform to express those opinions — for better or worse.

If you look at what our world has journeyed through over the last several years...

- Global pandemic, political division, racial tensions, soaring inflation, supply chain problems, and currently the war in Ukraine
- It's easy to wonder if God is there, if He cares? If he's involved, If He's good?
 - Maybe that's you.
 - Maybe you're wondering if God knows what you've gone through — your disappointment, the losses you've suffered, your grief, your pain...
 - Or maybe you look at all that's happened in our world and are filled with anxiety, not knowing what personal or global catastrophe might be waiting... your level of uncertainty about the future never higher...
- Maybe you've given up on God, and you're just here today because you're a part of the CEO crowd — the "Christmas and Easter only" crowd — it's Easter Sunday, and this is just what you do.
- Maybe you'd rather be anywhere else than right now than in some country church that looks like a horse barn and you're just here because someone dragged you along today.

My hope for you today, whatever your experience in life has been, whatever you've had to face over these last several years, whatever your disappointments with God have been — my hope for you, and God's hope for you today *is that you would be willing to take a risk, and despite your disappointments with God have been, that you'd be willing to trust Him again, or maybe trust Him for the first time.*

One of the primary reasons my objections about Jesus changed is because I stopped looking at the peripheral issues around Christianity, and *I actually began to look at Jesus Christ Himself.*

I stopped judging Jesus by the negative experiences I had with His followers or with the church in general and I simply began *to wrestle with and look into the person of Jesus Himself.*

Jeremiah 29:13-14

"You will seek Me and find Me, when you seek Me with all your heart. I will be found by you, declares the LORD..."

What Jesus said about Himself

What did Jesus claim about Himself? *There are many claims about Him, but what did Jesus actually say about Himself?*

- “Before Abraham was, I am” (John 8:58)
 - Jesus claimed to be the same God that appeared to Moses in the burning bush, and that He was alive before Abraham was ever born, 2000 years prior.
- “I am the Bread of Life” (John 6:35)
 - Jesus claimed to be the nourishment that humanity needed for life itself.
- “I am the Light of the World” (John 8:12)
 - In a world lost in darkness, Jesus claimed to be the only hope for humanity.
- “I am the Door” (John 10:7,9)
 - Jesus claimed to be the door to salvation, and eternal deliverance.
- “I am the Good Shepherd” (John 10:11,14)
 - Jesus claimed to be the one who cares for, tends to, and leads all those who belong to Him.
- “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life” (John 14:6)
 - Jesus doesn’t claim to *know* the way, or simply *share* the Truth and Life... He says, “I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH and THE LIFE.”
- “I am the True Vine” (John 15:1,5)
 - Jesus says that the only way you’re going to bear fruit with any eternal significance is by connecting your life to my life. I’m the vine, you’re the branches, apart from me you can do nothing.

Do those claims sound like claims a good moral teacher would make? Or someone who just had some good advice for people?

- There’s a point in the gospel of Mark where Jesus turns to His followers and He asks them... “*these people say this, these people think that... but who do YOU say that I am?*”

The reality is, there is a day coming when you will stand before God himself, and you will be asked that question. And you won’t be able to blame Jesus’ followers, or other people’s opinions, or the circumstances you faced in a broken and fallen world.

This is the most important question you’ll ever answer... “Who do YOU say Jesus is?”

Peter responds and says, **Mark 8:29** “You are the Christ.”

In other words, “*You’re the long-awaited Messiah, the Anointed One. The one true King of Heaven and Earth, You are God in human flesh.*”

Before Christ’s crucifixion, before He was nailed to a criminal’s cross, Jesus said this...

John 11:25

“I am **the resurrection** and **the life**. Whoever believes in Me, though he die, yet shall he live, ²⁶ and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die.

What does this mean? What is Jesus saying when He makes this claim.

There are two monumental realities in this statement.

1. Jesus is saying, when I die, “I will be Raised to Life.”
2. And on the other hand, He is saying, “If you trust in Me, my resurrection life will live in you!”

He's saying, "I am YOUR resurrection. I am **the way** anyone will receive a new life... because I'm raised to new life FOR YOU!"

John 2:19-21

"Destroy this temple, and in **three days** I will raise it up." ²⁰The Jews then said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?" ²¹But he was speaking about the temple of his body.

- Jesus is the only person in human history to predict his own death and resurrection and have it actually happen!!
- On top of that, Jesus' brother James, even believed He was God incarnate...

But I want you to see what Jesus is promising in His resurrection...

John 11:25

"I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in Me, **though he die, yet shall he live**, ²⁶ and everyone who **lives and believes in Me shall never die**.

1 Corinthians 15:26

The last **enemy** to be destroyed is **death**.

- Death is your enemy!

*But of all the world's religions, Christianity alone sees death not just as an enemy, **but as a defeated enemy!** Because in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the power of death has been broken forever!*

The Apostle Paul even taunts death.

1 Corinthians 15:55

"O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?"

1 Corinthians 15:57

...thanks be to God, who gives us the **victory** through our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the resurrection of Jesus Christ, He has broken the power of death itself!

"He [Jesus] is the 'first fruits,' 'the pioneer of life,' He has forced open a door that has been locked since the death of the first man. He has met, fought, and beaten the King of Death.

*Everything is different because He has done so."*¹

~ C.S. Lewis

Because of the resurrection:

Death no longer breaks us — but it makes us.

If you live, God is with you.

If you die, God is with you.

**In the resurrection of Christ,
we don't just have a temporary solution to a timeless problem —
we have a heavenly solution to the HUMAN problem.**

¹ C.S. Lewis. *Complete Works of C.S. Lewis* (Strelbytskyy Multimedia Publishing, Feb 1, 2021)

**In the victory of Jesus over death, hell, and the grave
every single one of us can have
FORGIVENESS FOR THE PAST
POWER FOR THE PRESENT
UNSHAKABLE HOPE FOR YOUR FUTURE**

John 11:25

“I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in Me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die.”

- Not, whoever is good enough... not whoever doesn't struggle with sin... not whoever jumps through enough hoops... and attends enough church services... or whose good outweighs their bad
- Let me tell you something... you are exactly who Jesus came for. It's people like you and me, the people who know they don't deserve God's forgiveness... Jesus said, it's not those who are well that need a doctor, it's the sick... Jesus came for the outcasts, the misfits, the outsiders, the nobodies, the screw ups, the addicts, the broken, the hurting, the lonely, the despondent and depressed, the fearful, the anxious, the tired, the weak

John 3:16-17

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

He came because He loves you. He died because He loves you. He rose because He loves you. And today, right now, He wants you to know, He didn't come to condemn you, He came so that you wouldn't perish, but have everlasting life. Resurrection life.

Discussion Questions

1. Which of Jesus' "I am" statements about Himself resonate most with you? Why?
2. If someone were to ask you, "Who do you say Jesus is?" what would you say?
3. How does Christianity see death as a defeated enemy?
4. How do YOU see death?
5. Discuss: "In the resurrection of Christ, we don't just have a temporary solution to a timeless problem — we have a heavenly solution to the HUMAN problem."
6. Discuss what "*whoever* believes," and "*everyone* who lives and believes" means.

NOTES