

Who Is Jesus?

Conqueror of Death

Death is terribly wrong. It is the enemy of humankind, as no one can elude it. Its power seems inescapable; no matter how strong, rich, or famous anyone may ever become, they will not live forever. Many fear death because it is inevitable, because it separates people from loved ones and from material possessions, and simply because it is unknown. However, there is hope, because one man defeated death. He is the Son of God, Jesus Christ. Because he died, was buried, and resurrected, we need not fear death anymore and can be freed from the grip of our sinful nature, for he both defeated death and provided a perfect sacrifice which covers all our sins. The incredible power displayed by Jesus in his conquering of the tomb far surpasses any feat of strength or might throughout all human history. For these reasons it is evident that Jesus' resurrection greatly impacts our life and future, and that understanding the resurrection of Jesus is crucial to understanding who Jesus is.

What is Resurrection?

First of all, what does it mean that Jesus resurrected? First of all, he died, as all of us will die, and for three days his body stayed in the ground while his spirit ascended to heaven. This is what many mistakenly think Jesus' resurrection means. However, his body did not remain in the ground forever. He arose from the grave and was reunited with his body, not just to die again, but to live forever as a perfected being in his 'life *after* life after death'. Jesus' resurrection could not merely mean that his spirit rose to be in heaven. Death would not have been defeated if his body stayed in the ground, for by definition he still would be dead. Instead, Jesus was reunited with his physical body, and his tomb is empty. But this was not a weak and illness prone body that he left. This was a perfected physical body that can never decay, never get sick, and never perish.

What does Jesus' Resurrection Mean for Us?

Not only did Jesus conquer death through his resurrection, but he also provided us with the offer to be freed from our sins. Paul writes in the first half of Romans 6:23 that "the wages of sin is death." This means that if anyone has ever sinned, they must pay for their sin with the punishment of death. Unless anyone is without sin, they cannot be in the presence of God, for God is completely without sin. No one is perfect, therefore we are all sinners. We inherited our sinful nature from Adam, and no man will ever be perfect. Again, however, there is one exception, and that is Jesus. Because Jesus was perfect, he was able to provide a sacrifice which covers all of our sins, *every single one*. He did not deserve death. However, he took all our sin upon himself and in return we received all of his righteousness. Someone still had to die for our sins, for God would not be just if he allowed sin to exist without punishment. Before Christ's sacrifice, it was us. Now however, we have available "the gift of God [which] is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord," which Paul writes in the second half of Romans 6:23.

In his resurrection, Jesus not only provided the perfect sacrifice so we could have forgiveness of our sins, but he also provided the example for the kind of resurrection we all will experience one day (Daniel 12:2). We will be reunited with our bodies when Jesus establishes his new kingdom on Earth, and in that day God will judge everyone. Those who love Jesus and have accepted his sacrifice for their sins will be with the brothers and sisters in Christ whom we love forever in eternal paradise.

What is the Importance of Jesus' Resurrection for Christianity?

Simply put, if Jesus did not rise from the dead, Christianity is dead. We would be left with just another good teacher, who was not God, and we would have no savior and no hope for forgiveness of our sins. In fact, we would be left with something even worse, for Jesus claimed to be God and predicted his death and resurrection. If he did not resurrect and is not God, Jesus would indeed be a blasphemer and a liar. All the promises he ever made would be empty. Indeed, our belief is in vain, as Paul said in I Corinthians 15:17, "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins." However, Jesus did rise from the dead, and he is God. His resurrection proves his promises are true and that he can be trusted. Everything came to pass just as Jesus said it would. We can therefore have the assurance that all he has predicted for the future will also come true.

There is no doubt that death is wrong. Jesus, however, has provided the answer humanity needed, as he conquered death so that we may no longer be enslaved to it. Because of Jesus' death and resurrection, families cannot be torn apart, friends cannot be separated, and death holds no power over us. Christ was the first to rise, and like him, we will all rise. On that day, those who love Jesus will be together with Him and the Christian brothers and sisters who we love as perfected beings, without sin and without flaw, in an eternal perfect existence. Because of this I invite everyone to take hold of the hope and freedom found in Jesus. He has shown infinite and perfect love to us, and has provided us with the hope of salvation and a perfect eternal existence with him and those we love. All he asks for in return is our love.

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