

## The Resurrection of Jesus

### *Its Significance (1 of 12)*

The key event distinguishing Christianity's founder from the founder of any other world religion is the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Without the resurrection, Christianity would have had only a limited, local following. Like water to a flame, a dead Jesus would have quenched the zeal of Christians. Yet, Jesus did rise and Christianity's influence rose with Him.

Jesus did something no one else had done. Abraham, the father of Judaism, died and never experienced a bodily resurrection. Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, died and stayed dead. Mohammed, Islam's revered prophet, died in 632 A.D. and his tomb can still be visited in Medina. Yet, Jesus died and was seen alive by hundreds of witnesses three days later. Why should the resurrection of Jesus be significant to you?

**It is evidence for unbelief.** Jesus, before His death declared, "...no sign will be given...except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matthew 12:38-40). If a man claims he will die and come to life we can come to three basic conclusions. Either he is a raving lunatic, He is a liar or he is the Lord. If Jesus is still dead, He fits in the

lunatic or liar category. Yet, if He arose, it is incredible evidence Jesus is who He claimed!

**It answers the believer's doubt.** It is easy to doubt the likelihood of a man dying and coming back to an earthly existence. Jesus realized this and showed Himself to His doubting disciples on several occasions (Luke 24:38-43; John 20:24-29). It is okay to have doubts. However, like Thomas, when sufficient evidence has been shown to prove Jesus did truly die and was resurrected we should have the integrity to proclaim "*My Lord and my God*" (John 20:28). In this series of articles, we plan to provide evidence, month by month, for the resurrection so your

*"In this series of articles, we plan to provide evidence for the resurrection so your skepticism can be replaced by conviction."*

**The resurrection validates the teachings of Jesus.** If Jesus was right about this unpredictable event, then Jesus is right in everything else He taught. Many want Jesus as Savior, but reject Him as Lord. Yet, if Jesus was resurrected it proves His Lordship over our lives. This was the ultimate conclusion of Peter's first sermon in Acts 2:36 as he said, "...let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God

*has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."*

**It addresses our fear of death.** For those who have no hope beyond this life, death is bound to be a grueling experience. Yet, the resurrection of Jesus is proof positive life exists beyond the grave. If God could grant it to Jesus, it can be given to us too. For this reason, Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15:54-55, "So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: 'Death is swallowed up in victory.' O Death, where is your sting?" The tragedy of death will be a gut-wrenching blow to those who cannot see a life beyond. Through Jesus, we have a future.

**It is a pattern for our own life.** Jesus selflessly paid the ultimate price for our sins. He died, but rose to new life. The life of a Christian is one of selflessness. We do not live for our own pleasures, but to please God who created us and will save us. This philosophy is part of having "*the mind of Christ*" (Philippians 2:3-11). Such a life does require sacrifice. However, it also includes an eternal reward. The raising of Jesus from the dead guarantees a reward will follow those who make the sacrifice. Will you turn away from sin while trying to live a new life of devotion to God (Romans 6:3-14)? Sin's pleasures will only last for so long... *Joshua R. Welch*