

How the Resurrection of Christ Changes Lives

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Introduction: Biblical Christianity is widely misunderstood.

- A. Many view Christianity as they do other world religions as just containing a philosophy of life and a way of living.
 - 1. Many just look at “the rules” and consider faith as a “hope-so” for heaven and for a God who answers prayer.
 - 2. This view of Christianity brings people to look at it as an insurance policy or as an occasional medication. Some take a “dose” once a year!
- B. Jesus came teaching a faith that is based on a foundation of reason and evidence. **(Jn 8:32)**
 - 1. Jesus during His ministry pointed those who would hear to consider the implications of His miracles. **(Jn 14:10-11)**
 - 2. Jesus also pointed to fulfilled prophecy concerning His identity. **(Mt 22:41-46)**
 - 3. Jesus pointed to a God who has great power and Who acts on behalf of men. He pointed to reason so that we might know God.
 - 4. Jesus challenged every man to seek so that they can know! **(Lk 11:9-10; Jn 7:17)**

I. The central question of Christianity: “Who do you say that I am?”

- A. Christianity is based upon the identity of its founder, Jesus Christ. **(Mt 16:13-17)**
 - 1. This makes Christianity different than the major world religions!
 - 2. The question for each of us is: “Can I know that Jesus is the Son of God?”
 - 3. Have you ever considered the evidence for Jesus being the Son of God?
- B. God has chosen the event in history that He will give abundant proof for all!
 - 1. There are many events and miracles in the Bible that we have to accept with little proof. God has chosen to make faith available to those who are willing to dig deep. **(Mt 13:15-16)**
 - 2. There is one sign that Jesus pointed to in His ministry and the apostles pointed to in their ministry, the resurrection of Christ. **(Jn 2:18-21; Mt 12:39-40)**
 - 3. Again, this makes Christianity unique in relationship to other major world religions. Christianity is based on a *verifiable historical event!*
- C. At the heart of every sermon in the book of Acts is *proof of the resurrection of Christ!* **(Acts 2:32; 3:13-15)**
 - 1. The primary evidence is found in the eyewitness testimony of the apostles and the fulfilled prophecy concerning Jesus.
 - 2. I urge all to consider the powerful evidence found here. The Apostles gave their lives for this testimony. **(1 Cor 15:30-32)**
 - 3. How does the proof of this change our lives?

II. The resurrection establishes a clear way of thinking and living

A. We can know that Jesus is the Son of God! (Rom 1:3-4)

1. Why does the resurrection prove this? Jesus is not the first person raised from the dead in the Bible!
2. Jesus claimed ahead of the event that His resurrection would establish His identity. His enemies knew this and *tried to prevent it!* (Mt 27:63-66)

B. We can know that the Bible is the word of God.

1. He claimed the writers were moved by the Holy Spirit. (Mark 12:36; Jn 16:13)
2. He claimed the word of God is without contradiction. (John 10:34-35)
3. Man was to live by every word from God! (Matt 4:4, 7, 10; 28:18-20)

C. Jesus showed how God's words are to be respected. (Jn 12:48-50)

1. Christians take the Bible very seriously and seek to study, understand and practice what is written! This simple stand is very rare today! (1 Pt 4:11)
2. The resurrection lets me know the significance of the life to come! (1 Cor 6:14)
3. I can live a forgiven life with the providential care of God! (Acts 2:36-39)
4. How many have no direction or assurance in their lives? Consider the resurrection!

III. The resurrection gives great boldness and purpose

A. When you know these truths it changes everything! (2 Cor 4:13-14)

1. The Apostles had forsaken Jesus and were slow to believe. When they saw and experienced the evidence they became very different people.
2. The same group that crucified Jesus did not intimidate them at all. (Acts 4:8-13)
3. The Apostle Paul was astonished at the truth of Jesus and He gave his life to speaking to any and all that would hear! (Acts 9:1-6; Gal 1:13, 23-24)
4. The lives of the Apostles are evidence that must be considered.

B. Have these truths changed your life?

1. Perhaps you have yet to test and understand these truths.
2. This faith will change everything in your life. You can have just as Peter had "a living hope." (1 Pt 1:3-4; Acts 17:30-31)
3. Building this faith in your lives and others become central. (Heb 10:23-25)
4. It will also test relationships and build new ones.

C. What is the first step needed when I come to believe in the resurrection of Christ?

1. Learn to trust a living Lord! (Jn 20:30-31)
2. Let that trust lead you to a new birth! (Rom 6:3-4)

Conclusion: The testimony of history is clear! The bodies of the founders of every major world religion occupy their tombs. Jesus' tomb is empty!