



He Has Risen! He Is Not Here
Mark 16:1-8
April 21, 2019

The actual, bodily resurrection of Jesus from the dead is the cornerstone of Christianity. That, coupled with the death of Christ, is the most important event and truth in the Bible (1 Corinthians 15:1-5). Today I will speak out my belief that this astonishing event really did take place and seek to draw out some of its meaning. If you are not so sure he was raised from the dead, however, I urge you to wrestle with it meaningfully. Everything about Christianity and about life itself is at stake.

Jesus' resurrection shows that He is truly unique. He made the bold and exceptional claim that he was going to be executed and then rise from the dead (Mark 8:31-32; 9:30-32; 10:32-34), and sure enough, that is exactly what took place. If Jesus had remained dead, he could be written off as a fraud. But since his words came true, he is trustworthy.

Jesus is also unique because God vindicated him when he raised him from the dead. It is difficult to think that a criminal could really be a messenger from God, especially one who was humiliated and executed. But when God raised Jesus from the dead, he set his seal of approval on him. The early spokesmen underscored this with the phrase "but God." Humans killed him, but God raised him from the dead (Acts 2:23-24; 3:15; 4:10; 5:30; 10:39-40; 13:28-31). God's view of Jesus, expressed in the resurrection, stands in stark contrast to the human view and vindicates Jesus from his temporary humiliation.

Jesus' "de-fanged" death, another utterly unique deed. Death is the greatest enemy of people (1 Corinthians 15:26; Hebrews 2:14-15). But Jesus' resurrection gives us hope that we, too, will be raised from the dead. Resurrection downgrades death to "sleep" (1 Corinthians 15:51; 1 Thessalonians 4:13).

The resurrection of Jesus shows he can be trusted, God vindicated him, and he overcame our greatest enemy. As a result, the resurrection shows Jesus' true identity. He is the Son of God (Romans 1:4; cf. Acts 2:36; Romans 10:9).

The resurrection of Jesus from the dead not only shows him to be wholly unique, it also calls us to be unique. We've noted that he is trustworthy, so we need to trust him. Going further, we also need to follow and obey him as the leader and Lord that he is (Luke 6:46; Romans 7:4; 2 Corinthians 5:15; Colossians 3:1). Living this way will be a significant contrast to the many who live by their desires, emotions, and whims.

We are also called to a unique hope, that we will be raised from the dead and live with him forever. Our hope lies primarily outside our lifetimes and planet. Following Christ will make some matters in our lives better and some things harder. Regardless, our primary hope is not here and now (1 Corinthians 15:19) but there and then, in heaven (Philippians 3:20; Colossians 1:3-5; Hebrews 13:14). Yet our hope for the future also enables a confident and positive attitude here and now, even in hardships (Romans 12:12; 1 Thessalonians 1:3; 1 Timothy 6:17; Hebrews 6:19). Living in hope, too, will contrast greatly with those who have no hope (Ephesians 2:12; 1 Thessalonians 4:13).

The resurrection of Christ is amazing news! The women "said nothing to anyone" because they were afraid (Mark 16:8). I encourage you to pray and watch for an opportunity to "say something to someone" about this most profound event (Colossians 4:5).

