

# What Does Jesus' Resurrection Say to a Deadly Pandemic?

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## I. Introduction

When it was clear that COVID-19 had become a pandemic, fear and panic set in. Not only were people afraid to go out, the virus brought with it worry and anxiety because it's been the cause of losses in the trillions. People are not just worried about their health; they're worried about their jobs, their 401(k)s, and their future. Is there a reason to celebrate this Easter?

## II. What Does Jesus' Resurrection Have to Do with a Deadly Virus?

A pandemic called COVID-19 has hit this world and it's stopped everything in its tracks. Entire economies are paralyzed and millions (perhaps billions) are under lockdown confined to their homes. Everything has stopped because there's a danger out there: as of April 11, globally there are 1,614,951 confirmed cases and 99,887 deaths with 213 countries, areas or territories affected. In the U.S. there are 492,416 cases and 18,559 deaths. Yet today is Easter Sunday, the day Christians all over the world recognize as Resurrection Sunday. What hope can Jesus' resurrection offer a desperate world?

**Without Jesus' resurrection there is no hope AT ALL**, the entire Christian faith hangs on one single event in human history: Jesus' bodily resurrection. If Jesus did not come back from the dead, then every Christian church should shut down and never open again. The apostle Paul declares himself that if Jesus did not rise from the dead, then Christians should be pitied as the fools that they are (1 Corinthians 15:19). And he knows what he's talking about. Do you know who Paul was before the Lord found him? He was a terrorist who was killing Christians, as a Rabbi! (Acts 26:9-11). This is one of the greatest proofs of Jesus' resurrection, the fact that Jesus' early followers ran around the world proclaiming His resurrection in spite of tremendous persecution and death. No one would risk their life and property for a lie. The only reason you'd keep proclaiming Jesus' resurrection at the risk of life and limb is if in fact it was true. Case in point: the apostle Paul. Why would a Rabbi named Saul (later known as the apostle Paul), do such an incredible one-eighty? Why would he go from murderous rage against Christians to converting thousands all over the world to Christianity? And why would he undergo tremendous suffering (2 Corinthians 11:23-27) to preach a Gospel he knew to be a lie? There's only one answer: Paul not only knew it was true, He saw, spoke and met with the risen Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 9; Galatians 1:11-12).

**Why should Jesus' resurrection matter to you during a deadly virus?** Because Jesus' resurrection means your resurrection! Did you know that you were dead and needed life? Jesus gives you everlasting life that begins right now, all for simply putting your faith in Him: no sin can ever keep you from heaven and no work can ever earn you heaven (Ephesians 1:7; 2:1-9, cf. 1 Corinthians 3:10-15; 2 Timothy 2:13)—this also means that hell is no longer a threat, that's for dead people not those who possess eternal life (Revelation 20:11-15). And since you have Jesus' life within you; you have what He has; His resurrection becomes your resurrection (Romans 6:1-11). Having received everlasting life, Jesus offers you a brand new way of dealing with the fears of this world (Romans 8:31-39). Yes, COVID-19 is serious and we should take all necessary precautions. But if we have believed in Christ, we know that His resurrection life beats within us. His Spirit is nestled deep in our hearts (Galatians 4:6). Therefore, we have nothing whatever to fear, not even a deadly virus like COVID-19.

**Can Jesus really address our fears?** The main fears people have right now are death, unemployment, their retirement savings/investments vanishing, and an uncertain future. How does Jesus help us with these?

Why shouldn't we fear death? Humans fear death; it's built into us to hate and fear death. Why? God says that He's put eternity in our hearts (Ecclesiastes 3:11), i.e., every human being knows that life should not end and yet it does. Thus, death reminds us that there's something terribly wrong with the human experience. Why should Christians never fear death? Because of Jesus' resurrection, i.e., Jesus conquered death (Acts 2:22-27; Hebrews 2:14-15; Revelation 1:18), therefore, death cannot harm you. The Lord even says that if something manages to kill us, we're more than conquerors (Romans 8:36-37). Why? Because death is not the end of our story: when He returns to finally set all things right, we will live on forever with the Lord in a resurrection body like His (1 Corinthians 15:35-58). But perhaps death is not your main fear; you fear the horrible pain and suffering that might come from contracting COVID-19. Why shouldn't we fear pain and suffering before death? Notice how Jesus handled his pain and suffering: Jesus was under so much depression and agony that He began to sweat blood. But then He asked His Father for help and all His anguish disappeared (Matthew 26:36-39; Luke 22:39-46). The Father gives you the same right and access to His help (Galatians 4:6; Hebrews 4:16).

Why shouldn't we fear unemployment or our retirement savings going up in flames? Because the risen Jesus promised to never leave us nor forsake us; He promised that He would always provide everything we need (Matthew 6:25-34; 28:20). And if He has to provide us another home and family, He will (Mark 10:29-30). So if you happen to lose your job, all your savings, and everything you invested for your retirement, the Lord promises that you will never go without. He will provide everything you need.

Why shouldn't we fear an uncertain future? Because Jesus' resurrection revealed who He truly is, the Great I AM (John 6:35; 8:12, 58; 10:9, 11; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1). He has no beginning and no end, in fact, He is the beginning and the end (Revelation 1:8; 21:6; 22:13). Death could not hold Him because He is life itself and therefore has the power of life within Him. He is the one who created everything, visible and invisible (John 1:1-5; Colossians 1:15-17). He was there in the beginning of time and He promised to one day rescue us and this world from all its misery (Genesis 3:15). And He's there in the future at the end of time and He promises that He will make everything right: He will wipe every tear, remove every sorrow, and vanquish death forever; there will be no more pain. All those things will be no more (Revelation 21:4).

### III. Conclusion

*Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*