

# Why Would a Dead Guy Named Jesus Come Back to Life?

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## I. Introduction

Can dead people really come back to life? Why do Christians believe that Jesus was raised from the dead? And if He was raised from the dead, why, what's the point? So a dead guy came back to life, so what? How does that change anything?.....why did Jesus come back to life, what does that have to do with your life, your trials, your tribulations, with both your good times and bad?

## II. Why Should Jesus' Resurrection Matter, Why's It Important to Me?

**Without the Resurrection Christianity is a joke and no one should believe in it:** the apostle Paul clearly proves Jesus' resurrection, including the mention of over 500 eyewitnesses who saw Jesus alive after He died. But some Corinthians were running around saying that dead people can't come back to life. Therefore Paul says, *And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable*, 1 Corinthians 15:17-19. If the resurrection of Jesus Christ is not a historical fact, if it's a fairy tale told by Christians, then Paul basically says, "Your faith in Jesus is useless, you're still liable for your sins, and those who've died believing in Jesus are doomed. In fact, if Christians have believed this fairy tale, they should be pitied more than most because they are utter fools." Thus, if the dead don't come back to life, *Let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die* (2 Corinthians 15:32). Jesus' resurrection is not just another detail about Christianity, it is the foundation upon which it stands. Without it, Christianity crumbles, Christians are fools, and might as well live it up cause tomorrow we die.

### **The historical fact of Jesus' Resurrection:**

*Non-Christian accounts of Jesus' death, burial, and empty tomb*, most scholars, Christian or not, acknowledge that Jesus Christ was publicly crucified, buried, and that His tomb was found empty.<sup>1</sup>

*The empty tomb*, if Jesus' body was still in the tomb, the authorities would've easily exhumed the body and put an end to the rumors of Jesus' resurrection. Instead, Christians began preaching the resurrection of Jesus in Jerusalem, right where Jesus was crucified and buried. The people could've gone to the tomb themselves, but Jesus' body was ever produced and the empty tomb was never denied by either the Jewish or Roman authorities. In fact, the Jewish Sanhedrin bribed the Roman guards to say that the body was stolen by Jesus' disciples (Matthew 28:11-15).

*Women are the first witnesses to Jesus' resurrection*, if you lived during that time and you wanted a story about a dead guy coming back to life to be believed, women would be the last individuals you'd use as your eyewitnesses. Why? Because in both the ancient Jewish and Roman cultures a woman's testimony was regarded as fanciful and dismissible. In fact, a woman's testimony was so regarded that they weren't allowed as legal witnesses in a Jewish court of Law. Yet in all four resurrection narratives, women are the first and primary eyewitnesses. Why would the Gospel writers use them as eyewitnesses, unless that is what actually happened, i.e., unless it was true?

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<sup>1</sup> Jewish historian Josephus (Antiquities 18:3), Roman historian Tacitus (Annals 15:44), Lucian of Samosata (The Death of Peregrine 11-13), Mara bar Serapion (from a letter to his son at the British Museum), and even the Talmud corroborate the early Christian eyewitness accounts that Jesus was executed in Judea in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century A.D., under Pontius Pilate, by means of crucifixion, at the behest of the Jewish Sanhedrin, and that His tomb was found empty.

Jesus' disciples go from cowards to courageous evangelists, Christianity began and flourishes to this day because Jesus' disciples went around the world preaching the message of Christ's resurrection. Why is this significant? Because after Jesus died, the disciples thought that their movement was over. In fact, they were hiding out in a house for fear of the authorities, that they would come after them next (John 20:19). And when the women came to tell them that Jesus had risen from the dead, they thought it was a fairy tale (Luke 24:11). So what changed, how'd they go from cowards and skeptics to men who turned the world upside down with the message of Jesus' resurrection? What changed is that they saw Jesus with their own eyes, touched Him with their hands, and heard Him with their own ears (1 John 1:1-3). They believed in the resurrection so much that they died horrible deaths clinging to that belief. People may die for any number of reasons, but who would give up their life for a lie?

The arch-enemy of Christianity becomes a Christian, before Paul became an apostle, he was known as Saul of Tarsus, a Rabbi who hated Christianity and Christians with a fury that was unmatched. He was responsible for the persecution and death of thousands of Christians (Acts 8:1-3; 9:1-2; 22:19-20). So how in the world did Rabbi Saul of Tarsus become the Apostle Paul? He had a personal encounter with the resurrected Jesus Christ while he was on his way to persecute more Christians! (Acts 9:1-19). Paul became the most prolific and selfless defender of Christianity, bringing thousands upon thousands to Christ world-wide. And he suffered impoverishment, persecution, beatings, imprisonment, and execution for his steadfast belief in Christ's resurrection (2 Corinthians 11:23-27).

**Why did Jesus rise from the dead?** To give you a brand new life: Jesus didn't just die for your sins to save you from a place called Hell. He died to give you a brand new life where instead of trying to figure things out on your own, you get personal and intimate VIP access to God. Every time you have a problem, He's there to tell you how to fix it. Anytime you start believing that you're the worst loser, He's there to show you that you're not. Every time you come across something that's too BIG for you to move, He moves it for you. Basically, He's there for you 24/7 during your worst times and your best times. How does Jesus give you this wonderful life?

John 3:16, we were separated from God because of our sins. Jesus was willing to take our sins on Himself and die in our place. He experienced the separation from God we deserved. And His coming back to life proved that God accepted His payment for sin and death. Therefore, sin and death no longer have to be a problem for us because God made Jesus, who never sinned, an offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through His Son Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5:21). And all we have to do is simply believe in Jesus and instead of perishing in the Lake of Fire, He gives us everlasting life (John 3:16). But everlasting life is not an object; it's a person and His name is Jesus Christ, 1 John 1:1-2. Thus, the moment you believe in Him, He gives you Himself, i.e., He makes you part of Him (which is why Christians are called the Body of Christ, Colossians 1:24; 3:11). And from this point on, you will have personal and intimate VIP access to the God of the universe. How close is this relationship between you and God?

John 17:3, 20-26, eternal life is Christ in you and you in Him which is why eternal life is a never-ending, personal, and intimate relationship with God the Father and God the Son. They want to be part of every second of your life, to be there to guide you and surround you with their love (Ephesians 3:14-19). This sounds amazing, but can this really be true, can it really change our lives?

## **What does it mean to have a brand new life, how will Jesus change your life?**

You were never meant to have a miserable life, when God made you, He took personal interest in creating every detail of your being, from your hair color, to your personality, to the type of ice cream you love, to the marvelous talents and abilities you possess (Psalm 139:13-14). The reason you like what you like and are good at what you do is because God made you that way. But that's not all, He also had a very specific plan for your life. He had a plan for every day of your life (Psalm 139:16). Thus you were never meant to live a miserable and hopeless existence. But if no one ever takes you back to the God who made you to find out who you are, to discover the life He had planned for you, that it was never meant to be a life which you lived on your own but with Him by your side, then life will be chaotic, even unbearable. And it's not that once you believe in Jesus, everything turns to gold. Life is difficult. It will make you cry, frustrated, anxious, depressed, etc., etc. But there's a giant difference when you face anxiety, stress, and depression with Jesus by your side. When He's there, He'll give you a peace that surpasses all understanding despite the chaotic circumstances around you (Philippians 4:6-7).

The Lord changes Moses' life, here's what life will do to you when you try to live it without God: unlike most people, Moses knew why he was born: to be a deliverer. But when he was 40 yrs old, he tried it on his own and he failed miserably. He murdered an Egyptian and became a fugitive (Exodus 2:11-15). But being a deliverer is in his DNA which is why it comes out again after he flees (Exodus 2:16-19—Moses cannot stand seeing someone being oppressed; he must deliver them). This is you and me; there's something God made us to be, down to our DNA.

Fast forward forty years, Moses is now 80 years old; he's now a shepherd. How would you like to start a brand new career at 80? God comes to Moses and basically says, "Moses, it's time to fulfill your destiny. But this time, I'm going to show you how to do this. You'll never have to figure this out on your own. I'll be with you every step of the way," (Exodus 3:1-10, 12). How does Moses respond? He basically says, "Who am I? I'm no deliverer," (Exodus 3:11). What?! Of course you're a deliverer; it's in your DNA. Don't you remember the Egyptian, the wicked shepherds at the well?! Moses keeps arguing with God trying to convince Him that he's no deliverer (Exodus 4:1, 10, 13). This is what life is like when you try to live it without the Lord; it's filled with doubt, frustration, and fear. But when Moses believed the Lord, he went on to deliver Israel from the land of Egypt. He faced Pharaoh and his army without fear (Exodus 14) and every time he needed God's help, God was there (Deuteronomy).

Can the Lord change your life? You might think, "That's in the Old Testament. Sure, God was more personal then. He spoke directly to Moses and was with him anytime he needed. But where is He now?" We actually have more access to God now, than Moses did. We have His Spirit beating inside us (Galatians 4:6). Yes, Jesus' death saves us from a place called hell, but His resurrection life resurrects our dead existence (Romans 5:9-10). If you've believed in Christ, then you and He have become one. His resurrection life becomes yours. This means that you no longer have to struggle through this life (Romans 6:1-11).

Jesus power to resurrect is so strong that He can take a young man who at one point thought that being a gigolo would be a great life and turn him into a Pastor.

### III. Conclusion

*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. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.*