

## The Impact of the Resurrection

Welcome to Highlands, if you're a member, a regular visitor or a new guest today, we hope your time here is meaningful.

This is a special day, as it is in churches all around the world. We observe something that is crucial to our faith- The Resurrection.

If you are skeptical about the whole Jesus thing, then this is a good day to be here because our focus is on the heart of the Christian faith. If you're going to be questioning or doubtful about anything, then at least focus on the core essentials and not some side issues that get people sidetracked.

If you're going to ask questions, then it is best that the questions are centered on the essentials. Today we look at THE CORE ESSENTIAL – the Resurrection of Christ. It's so important because everything hinges on this one event. If it's false then the whole religion falls apart, but if it's true, then there are life changing implications for all of us.

Two unusual and remarkable things about the death of Jesus:

**He chose crucifixion**

**He didn't stay dead**

**He chose crucifixion**

Thousands of people died by crucifixion under Rome. It would have been common for travelers to see crosses and crucified bodies dotting the hills in the countryside. Many were killed in this way, but none chose it, except Jesus.

**John 10:14-18**

I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me, <sup>15</sup>even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. <sup>16</sup>I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock *with* one shepherd. <sup>17</sup>For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. <sup>18</sup>No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father.”

**He didn't stay dead**

**Nobody expected to find NO Body when they went to the tomb**

Everybody expected to find A body when they went to the tomb.

**John 20:1-3**

Now on the first *day* of the week Mary Magdalene came early to the tomb, while it was still dark, and saw the stone *already* taken away from the tomb. <sup>2</sup>So she ran and came to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him.”

They did the burial ceremony on the body because they expected him to stay dead.

They went to the tomb because they expected to see a body.

The Jewish leaders paid for a cover story because they expected the disciples to steal a dead body. They wanted to avoid an outbreak of “fake news”.

Dead people don't come back to life.  
These ancient people weren't gullible like modern people like to think.

When dead people come back to life, it makes some waves; There is an impact.  
EX: Lazarus – people were perplexed and some wanted to kill him John 12:9-11

The large crowd of the Jews then learned that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He raised from the dead. 10But the chief priests planned to put Lazarus to death also; 11because on account of him many of the Jews were going away and were believing in Jesus.

There is a difference between the resurrection of Lazarus and that of Jesus.  
Lazarus was raised from the dead by Jesus.  
Jesus rose from the dead

Was Jesus raised or did he rise? Biblical language indicates “both”  
Jesus spoke of how he would rise from the dead. He was in on it.  
There is also language that refers to the work of the Father.

*These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might 20 which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places Eph1*

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/eight-reasons-why-i-believe-that-jesus-rose-from-the-dead>

“The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again” (Mark 8:31)

Either way, the resurrection of Jesus is the unique work of the Godhead.

I found myself in a conversation with someone last week and as we spoke I kept going back to Jesus and the resurrection. Everything hangs on this.

When someone rises from the dead you really must deal with it in some way.

1. **Ignore it** - that is the default mode. It is surprisingly easy to do. The Ostrich approach that many have toward spiritual things.
2. **Reject it** - That is also surprisingly easy to do. In our natural state we are disposed toward unbelief. At least we oppose belief in something that will lead us to submitting to some external authority. If we can find or create a “Have it your way” religion or form of spirituality, then we'll take it as the first option. The Resurrection is too “in your face”. The implications are enormous. It means that we can't be God anymore, and we don't like it.
3. **Embrace it** - not on the basis of blind faith or intellectual weakness, but by honestly considering the alternatives.

What are the alternatives?

Let's look at THE FACTS???

### #1 An Empty Tomb

In 2000 years that has not been solved

### THEORY #1 SOMEONE STOLE THE BODY

Romans Soldiers - Why???. They had no motive, and would risk their lives.

**The Jewish leaders** – did they steal the body out of fear that the disciples would steal it and then claim a Resurrection? If so, then why not present the body once the resurrection talk started. It would have nipped this new movement in the bud.

### **The Disciples**

Again, Why?

Imagine that conversation...

Peter, who just denied even knowing Jesus – “Ok guys, here’s the plan. We’ll steal the body and then go out proclaiming that Jesus rose from the dead.”

Other disciples: “Wouldn’t that mean that the Romans and Jewish leaders would turn on us?”

Peter: “yes, but we can take the heat, right guys?” “Guys?” “Where did you go?”

What would they hope to get out of it?

A religious movement that would be opposed by the Jewish and Roman powers of the day. As we saw with Jesus, both of those groups could be pretty tough to deal with. They played hardball. They played for keeps. A shaky movement that would fall apart as soon as the first whistleblower confessed to the plot. It is really hard to keep a secret like that secret once people are submitted to persecution.

For 2000 years people have defended the resurrection, even in the face of persecution. Why? Because it happened and has been given credence by each generation. AND IT IS THE BEST EXPLANATION of the arch of history that followed the death of Jesus.

Why do people typically engage in such plots, conspiracies, and religious cults?

Power, Money, Sex

Hiding a dead body and saying he rose from the dead wouldn’t get them any of those.

The followers of Jesus had no social power; they were marginalized and most of the original disciples died violent deaths for their faith or were exiled.

They didn’t make money and they taught an ethic of financial generosity.

The sexual ethic they taught was in contrast to the promiscuous sexual values of the Roman culture. Their sexual morality was one of sexual restraint, purity, and monogamy.

Would they have had such a self-controlled approach to power, money and sex if their movement had been founded on a hoax about a stolen body?

### **THE IMPACT OF THE RESURRECTION:**

**Jesus is who he said he was.** This really is the simplest and most coherent option. But there are enormous implications of this.

*“The evidence for Jesus’ resurrection is so strong that nobody would question it except for two things: First, it is a very unusual event. And second, if you believe it happened, you have to change the way you live.”—*  
**Wolfhart Pannenberg,**

**Aldous Huxley:** “I had motive for not wanting the world to have a meaning. For myself, as well as most of my contemporaries, the philosophy of meaninglessness was one of liberation, and the liberation we sought was liberation from Christian morality.” **Ends and Means**

### Transformed lives of the disciples

Those scared men who abandoned Jesus went out and endured persecution for preaching a Risen Christ. Something changed them. If it wasn't the resurrection, then WHAT WAS IT? There is no other credible option.

### Transformed lives of those who heard their preaching

The focus of NT preaching is the Cross and Resurrection of Christ.

Something happened that shook up the world, and it pre-dated a Bible distribution effort. There was no NT when the early disciples went out preaching, but something was a force in their lives and in the culture. The rag tag group of cowardly men grew into a wave of men and women of courage and power.

What was at the heart of it? RESURRECTION POWER

### A Secure Future and Hope

I Cor 15 – the resurrection life is secured by Christ. Both our eternal resurrection and new life now. New life has been established by Jesus. Where do you want to see NEW LIFE AND RESURRECTION POWER?

The life we seek, and desire is found in Jesus, and in him alone. It's not found in the praise, applause, approval, and status indicators of this world – wealth, beauty, image, possessions, position, popularity or white teeth and great abs after age 40,

### The call of the Resurrection is to come to Jesus, as believer or non-believer

The call is to be extended to the world. We are called to take the Good News of Jesus into every area and relationship of life.

1 Cor 15:6-10 the life of Christ cascades down into the life of others. It happens to us so it can flow through us.

When, how will this happen? Those are the questions we ask?

- ❖ It is happening now. He has started the work of renewal in our lives now, if you know Christ.
- ❖ In Christ, you are stronger than you know.
- ❖ You are more courageous, gracious, compassionate, and forgiving than you know.
- ❖ The reality is that you have more of it than you know.
  
- ❖ You love God more than you know.
- ❖ It may not all show right now, but right now is not all there is. We may not see all the renewal and change we want to see, but we can experience real and substantive renewal.

Don't underestimate what God is doing and can do in your life.

### The work you are doing to extend the resurrection of Jesus is not in vain – 1 Cor 15:58

You may feel discouraged in the classroom, the factory, the office, the hospital, the workshop, the kitchen, classroom, the family room, etc but take courage. Your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

Root your life in Jesus; Extend this life to others and see the fruit of the resurrection life become evident in you.

What would it look like?

That's what we deal with each week in church, community groups, bible studies and one on one conversations.

The Good news of the Resurrection attacks our PRIDE AND PRETENSE.

It reminds us that our pride and pretense are what created the need for Jesus to die for us in the first place. The good news of the resurrection reminds us that we are bigger sinners than we dare admit and more loved and forgiven in Christ than we dare imagine.

We observe and celebrate the Resurrection by knowing Christ, not by eating chocolate eggs.

Do you know Him?

<http://freedominorthodoxy.blogspot.com/2013/09/wolfhaart-pannenberg-on-6-key.html>

<http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2014/september-web-only/strange-legacy-theologian-wolfhart-pannenberg.html>

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/unsystematictheology/2017/04/resurrection-revealed-jesus-divine-pannenberg/>

--	--