

Why is Easter a big deal? Matthew 27 & 28

"He isn't here! He is risen from the dead, just as he said would happen." Matthew 28:6

If the resurrection is true it proves who Jesus is – God in flesh and he has come to save us.

"do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit.²¹ And she will have a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." Matthew 1:20-21

"...death spread to everyone for everyone sinned." Romans 5:12

Easter is God dealing with the universal problem of sin and death.

"The leading priests, the teachers of religious law, and the elders also mocked Jesus. ⁴² "He saved others," they scoffed, "but he can't save himself! So he is the King of Israel, is he? Let him come down from the cross right now, and we will believe in him! ⁴³ He trusted God, so let God rescue him now if he wants him! For he said, 'I am the Son of God.'" Matthew 27:41-43

"At noon, darkness fell across the whole land until three o'clock. ⁴⁶ At about three o'clock, Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" which means "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?" Matt 27:45-46

What was happening then? God was laying on Jesus my sin, your sin and nailing it to the cross so that we would not have to pay the price for ourselves. God who is holy, could not look on sin so he turned his back on his son. Producing Jesus darkest hour, (2 Cor 5:21) so that we could be made right with God.

"Then Jesus shouted out again, and he released his spirit." Matthew 27:50

"At that moment the curtain in the sanctuary of the Temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, rocks split apart, ⁵² and tombs opened. The bodies of many godly men and women who had died were raised from the dead. ⁵³ They left the cemetery after Jesus' resurrection, went into the holy city of Jerusalem, and appeared to many people." Matthew 27:51-53

"The Roman office and the other soldiers at the crucifixion were terrified by the earthquake and all that had happened. They said, "This man truly was the Son of God!" Matthew 27:54

Resurrection

"Don't be afraid!" he said. "I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. ⁶ He isn't here! He is risen from the dead, just as he said would happen. Come, see where his body was lying." Matthew 28:5-6

From that moment on those disciples lives were never the same as Jesus appeared different ones, including 500 at one time, only 3 days after they had seen him brutally put to death on the cross.

This event – resurrection – is either the pinnacle of history or the greatest fraud ever perpetuated.

"And if Christ has not been raised, then all our preaching is useless, and your faith is useless... And if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is useless and you are still guilty of your sins." 1 Cor 15:14 & 17

"But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead. He is the first of a great harvest of all who have died." 1 Cor 15:20

What does this mean for us today?

He was either a lunatic to avoid, a liar to be exposed or someone who had the truth to be followed.

"Jesus met them and greeted them. And they ran to him, grasped his feet, and worshiped him. ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to them, "Don't be afraid!" Matthew 28:9-10

Chuck Colson "I know the resurrection is a fact and Watergate proved it to me. How? Because 12 men had testified that they had seen Jesus raised from the dead, then they proclaimed that truth for 40 years without once denying it. Every one of them was beaten, tortured, stoned, put in prison. They would not have endured that if it were not true. Watergate embroiled 12 of the most powerful men in the world and they could keep a lie for 3 weeks. You're telling me 12 apostles could keep a lie for 40 years? Absolutely impossible!"

What is your response to the evidence for Jesus resurrection?