

The Resurrection of Jesus  
John 20:1-18

It is sometimes suggested that Christianity is an old religion. So many years have passed since the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the beginning of Christianity that there are some in the modern world who are asking two very good questions.

1. Did Jesus Christ actually rise from the dead?
2. What difference does it make?

I'd like to talk to you today about these **two questions**.

Look at it this way: *Either Jesus rose from the dead or He did not.*

If Jesus did not rise from the dead as Christianity claims, then Christianity is based on a claim that is not true. If the foundation of Christianity is not true, then the whole thing is suspect.

We need to make that statement stronger because the early Christians not only believed that Jesus rose from the dead, they promoted the idea through teaching and public proclamations.

If Jesus is not alive, these early Christians who taught, wrote and persuaded people to believe in the resurrection were pushing a lie and they knew it was a lie. For the early Christians, they are the ones who started the whole thing. They would not be the **deceived**. They would be the **deceivers**.

*If the foundation of Christianity is not true, then Christianity is based on a lie.*

So...what **evidence** do we have that can help us today?

From the very earliest days we know the followers of Jesus said *four things about Jesus as a package*. They said these four were all true and equally true:

**Jesus lived, died, buried, rose again.**

The early followers of Jesus knew that publicly proclaiming the resurrection of Jesus in certain times and places made suffering inevitable and martyrdom probable.

Someone might die for a **conviction** – they believe it to be true.  
No one, or at least not many, will die for a **concoction** – they know it is NOT true.

We also have some excellent sources for Jesus outside of Christianity as well.  
Here are *five sources outside the Bible* that give mention of Jesus:

Josephus, Tacitus, The Talmud, Lucian, Mara Bar-Serapion.  
The first of these three are strong opponents of Christianity. They all wrote as critics of Christianity, yet they unintentionally give us eye-witness testimonies of what was going on in the early days of Christianity.

Why this matters....

Jesus is alive and he offers LIFE to all who come to Him in faith and trust!

*These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God,  
and that by believing you may have life in his name. John 20:31*

*Christianity, if false, is of no importance, and if true, of infinite importance.  
The only thing it cannot be is moderately important. C. S. Lewis*