

The Resurrection

1. A 46-year-old building project (*John 2:18-22*)

Jesus seems to deliberately say things to wind up and confuse the religious authorities - here, when they ask (disbelievingly) for a sign of His authority, He says that He'll rebuild the Temple, the most precious place to them in the world.

Access to God, which was then highly restricted and effectively impossible for most people, is now available in Jesus Himself. Anyone can come to Him, He is the presence of God. *"The resurrection means we continually have the living temple of Christ with us today to worship God wherever we are."* (D.A. Carson) We have radical freedom in worship.

2. A giant fish (*Matthew 12:38-41*)

Again Jesus refuses to do miracles on demand to verify His authority to sceptics. Instead, it's another cryptic statement. All of us have moments when we ask for signs, right now, and Jesus says that God has already done it with the resurrection. His resurrection is all the proof that is needed that He is truly the Son of God.

The story of Jonah is difficult for modern people to swallow - but Jesus uses it to challenge us: if you've got a problem with that, how are you going to cope with the news that someone has resurrected from the dead to everlasting life?

3. A grieving sister (*John 11:21-27*)

Jesus takes Martha's orthodox belief in the resurrection at the end of time and reorients it in Himself. This isn't an abstract truth, it's about a Person. Jesus is the life, He is the resurrection.

Nothing can now separate us from His love (*Romans 8:35-39*) because nothing can stop Him from doing what He wants - which is to love us and give us His everlasting life. Ironically, Caiaphas prophesied that Jesus would do this (*John 11:49-53*).

4. The greatest enemy

Death is a horrible enemy but "the good news of the resurrection is that death is a defeated enemy and in rising has broken death's icy grip." All of creation is involved in this, all of it - everything that is wrong will be made right.

The Bible gives us a viewpoint as observers, not merely caught up in day-to-day life. Jesus is alive, never to die again.

Questions

- Why does God use irony and cryptic statements in the Bible?
- Which of the four statements spoke most powerfully to you?
- How are you enjoying the radical freedom of worship Jesus has given us?
- Are you tempted to make the gospel abstract or just something in the future? How can you experience Jesus' life today?



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