



What makes you so sure that Jesus rose from the dead?

That's a great question, because the fact of the Resurrection is the "hinge-pin" that our faith hangs on. If Jesus didn't rise from the grave, the "doors fall off" so to speak. Christianity falls apart. The apostle Paul said as much in 1 Corinthians 15:14-19

And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. 15 More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. 16 For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. 17 And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. 18 Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. 19 If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.

If the last word on Jesus is His death on the cross, then He is no different from anyone else who claimed to be sent by God to be "the final word on the subject" of how to get to God. (And there have been lots of people throughout the ages who have claimed just that.)

However, if Jesus has indeed risen from the dead, then He can be trusted as being the only One who was really telling the truth about being God's "Final Word." Jesus' resurrection from the grave would serve to validate as true everything He said. (Think about it... do you suppose God would have raised Him from the grave if He'd been lying to us?!) Jesus' resurrection from the grave is the basis for our hope that death will not be the end for us either.

Jesus' Resurrection really matters *that* much ! So, here's a sampling of the main reasons....

Why We Believe Jesus Rose from the Dead:

1. **Jesus predicted His resurrection** (Matt 16:21; Mark 9:9-10; John 2:18-22). so that when it happened everyone would know it wasn't a "fluke."
2. **The Old Testament prophesied it** (Psalm 16:10; compare Acts 2:25-31; 13:33-37).
3. **The tomb was empty** and the grave clothes vacant. If those who opposed Christ wished to silence His disciples, all they had to do was produce a body, but they could not. (John 20:3-9).
4. **Many people saw the resurrected Christ**. They looked on His face, touched Him, heard His voice, and saw Him eat (Matt. 28:16-20; Luke 24:13-39; John 20:11-29; John 21:1-9; Acts 1:6-11; 1 Cor. 15:3-8).
5. **The lives of the disciples were radically changed**. Though they fled and even denied Christ at the time of His arrest, they later feared no one in their proclamation of the risen Christ (Matt 26:56, 69-75). People are not willing to die for a lie.
6. **The resurrection was the central message of the early church**. The church grew with an unwavering conviction that Christ had physically risen from the dead and was the Lord of the church (Acts 4:33; 5:30-32; Rom. 5:24).
7. **Men and women today testify that the power of the risen Christ has transformed their lives**. We know that Jesus is alive not only because of the historical and biblical evidence but also because He has miraculously touched and changed OUR lives.

As the Apostle Paul continues in 1 Corinthians 15:

20 But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. 21 For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. 22 For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. 23 But each in turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him....When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory."

55 "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?"

56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

58 Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

Thanks for asking,
Pastor David

Send your questions to pastor@livingwordlutheran.net