



17th April 2022 | Resurrection Sunday



*Is your life 'living proof'
of Christ's resurrection?*

Intro | Are you living proof of the resurrection of Jesus?

Many years ago, there was a little pithy question that circulated amongst Christian youth groups. The question was designed to provoke your attitude toward living an authentic Christian life, both privately and publicly.

What was the pithy line?

"If you were arrested for being a follower of Christ, would there be sufficient evidence to convict you?"

[pause]

In other words, does every person in your immediate context, your neighbours, your friends, your family members – know that you are a follower of Christ?

Or, if someone told them you are a Christian, would they say, 'O goodness, I had no idea'?

As I was praying about what to share on this wonderful resurrection morning, I was listening to praise and worship music. A song came on that I'd never heard before.

But, one line of the song, hit me and so I immediately wrote it down.

The line was "make my life living proof of the resurrection of Christ."

Almost immediately the pithy question of my youth arose in my heart.

So, this is the question that I pose to you today?

Are you living proof of the resurrection of Jesus?

Has the truth of the resurrection of our Saviour, which we celebrate every year, had such a lasting impression in your life, that your everyday lives reflect the truth of God's power in raising his Son Jesus from the dead?

Pretty convicting question, isn't it?

Don't worry, I was immediately challenged – and had to think really hard, 'how does the truth of the resurrection of Jesus impact my daily life?'

I mean, 'what difference does it make?'

This event that took place about 2000 years ago, that stopped the world, and changed the course of history ever since ... how does Christ's victory over death get represented in my life?

Do people see it? Can they tell I'm a believer in the resurrection of Christ?

What makes me different from any other Jane, Judy or Cathy?

[or for the men, Tom, Dick or Harry]

Well ... believe it or not ... all those who have made Jesus their Lord and Saviour, are living, breathing miracles and powerful witnesses of Christ's resurrection!

Why?

Well, it's because of what happened all those years ago, that amazing historical event, when Jesus rose on that early Sunday morning – that makes every single follower of Christ, living, breathing miracles of the resurrection.

Point 1 | The same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead dwells in us. God's Spirit in us transforms both our inward and our outward lives

The past few days, Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday have been like a journey where we walked in the footsteps of Jesus following him to the cross.

The seriousness and pain of Good Friday where we focussed on Jesus dying in our place is for many people a painful experience.

In fact, some people don't come to the Good Friday service because it is so depressing. At the end of the service, we don't leave in joy, we don't leave with smiles on our faces, we leave in silence, and mourning ...

Like the followers of Jesus many years ago ... we are heartbroken, wondering how on earth the death of our beloved Saviour could actually be part of God's plan.

But the church calendar is designed this way for a reason.

We walk the way of the cross, and feel the loss as our Saviour hangs on a tree (Good Friday).

We then feel the darkness and death of being in the tomb with Christ (Holy Saturday).

We do this because it reminds us of an important inner work that God does in our hearts, the moment we trust and declare our faith in His Son.

In his letter to the Romans, Paul told them that we must never look upon Jesus' death and resurrection as an event that is separate and independent from us.

In chapter 6 of his letter, he writes,

Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. (Romans 6:3-5)

The death and resurrection of Jesus was a miraculous work of God's transformation from death to life.

Jesus' physical, mortal body was dead from Friday afternoon to late Saturday night. But then, early in the morning, while it was still dark, the earth shook, lightening flashed, and the Spirit of God broke open the tomb.

He who was dead was raised to eternal life.

Sin and death had been defeated and now Jesus, the victorious One, was the Lord of the living and the dead.

But that miracle that occurred all those years ago, still has lasting impact now.

When Luke described the power of Jesus ministry, he said that Jesus was not the ONLY one to rise from the dead, rather Jesus was the FIRST to rise from the dead.

"[The prophets and Moses said] that the Christ must suffer and that, by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to our people and to the Gentiles." (Acts 26:23)

So all of us who have accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, are no longer 'dead', for we too participate in Christ's resurrection life, now.

That's the first reason why we are walking miracles!

The greatest miracle has taken place in our hearts, when our old dead, sinful nature was removed, and Christ's new lifegiving nature was implanted. We were rescued from the prison of the kingdom of darkness and transferred into Christ's Kingdom light (Colossians 1:13)

But wait! There is more evidence than what happens internally.

Point 2 | The transformation story of our lives is a testimony of God's miraculous power living in us

The second evidence admitted in the courtroom of proof that we are living proof of Christ's resurrection, is the story of God's work in our life.

If God's Spirit is involved in our lives, then there HAS to be a remarkable story to be told.

It may be a story of being raised in a Christian family and faithfully serving in the church community, looking after the saints of God.

It may be a story of caring for another, laying down our own dreams and desires so someone we love is looked after.

It may be a story of healing of past hurts, so that others when they see you say, 'I would never have believed that happened in your life.'

Or, it may be a story of deliverance from an addiction or unhealthy habit.

God's transformative work in our lives is never a boring story.

No! Our lives may never be converted into a Hollywood sensation, but that doesn't mean they don't show Christ's resurrection power in vivid colour and breathtaking action.

Remember what Paul wrote to the believers at Corinth,

"You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts." (2 Corinthians 3:3)

You are a living letter written by the Spirit of God which demonstrates God's miraculous power to bring life from death, order from chaos, joy from misery, healing from brokenness, forgiveness from bitterness.

Yes, your life is a miraculous story!

But, hang on a minute!

Point 3 | Confronting self-doubt: If my life is living proof, why aren't more believing in Jesus?

When I first heard the question, are you living proof of Jesus resurrection', I was very quickly convicted by the thought,

'well, there mustn't be too much evidence, because not many have been converted by what they've seen'.

Did you think that?

We must never forget that not everyone believed the disciples' reports either.

Even with all the evidence of the Spirit of God working powerfully through them in signs, miracles and healings, some still chose not to believe.

It is our responsibility to be obedient to whatever the Spirit of God prompts us to do.

If He prompts us to pray for someone, may we be obedient.

If He prompts us to visit someone in hospital, may we be obedient.

If He prompts us to share why we are not anxious about the state of the world or the future of the planet, may we be courageous in sharing our hope.

And we pray for God to open the eyes of those who are spiritually blind, that they may see the goodness of God.

But, there is often one piece of evidence which acts as the catalyst in a trial ... convincing proof that seals the conviction one way or another.

What is this crucial evidence in our lives?

This evidence was apparent in the lives of Peter and John.

When they stood before the rulers and elders of the people, we read that Peter and John were "filled with the Holy Spirit".

Now the religious leaders couldn't *see* that they were filled with the Spirit.

But what could they see?

"When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus." (Acts 4:13)

May our lives be filled with courage and passion.

May we never shrink back from telling others the miraculous work God has done OR is doing in our life.

Application |

So, my question remains? Is your life living proof of Jesus' resurrection?