



“So, what has Jesus’ resurrection done for you, Dad?”

It’s a question my kids have every right to ask me: “Hey, you’re a Christian, Dad, so everything you believe hinges on Jesus being raised from the dead, so what obvious difference has his resurrection made in your life?”

And other than their Mother, who better to ask? Here am I, their Dad, an average chap who’s spent most of his life steeped in Christianity, so what have I got to show for it that might just make them say, “Well, yeah man, that makes sense; cool?”

Can I explain, then, how the resurrection of Jesus has played out in my life in terms that would be easy for my kids to understand and relate to - and maybe come up with some dramatic evidence for them too?

So I went back to what happened right after Jesus was resurrected to see if there were any helpful clues there, because surely that was the best time of all for Jesus to introduce the differences his resurrection would create. He was fresh out of the grave, causing a massive ripple that dead people could actually come back to life again, so it’s obvious that people would want to know what on earth was going on, and what dramatic things might happen next.

But Jesus doesn’t do anything dramatic next. He simply says to his disciples, “Don’t be afraid” in Matthew 28:10, “Peace be with you” in Luke 24:36, and he gives his disciples the authority to forgive and not forgive in John 20:23.

In response to this amazing miracle of his resurrection, then, Jesus wants three things to happen to his disciples: that first of all they have no fear, that secondly they experience peace of mind, and thirdly that they make forgiveness their priority. And because this was now the resurrected Jesus speaking he clearly meant what he said, and because of his resurrection he clearly had the power to make all three possible.

So if I’d been there at Jesus’ resurrection I would have heard him say all three of those things to me, and therefore that he intended them to happen to me too as one of his disciples, as a direct result of his resurrection. Have those three things happened to me too, then?

Well, I’d never actually thought about it in those terms before, but I have to admit that, looking back over the last fifty plus years since knowing about Jesus’ resurrection, I have called out to him many times to calm my fears and give me peace during times of overwhelming stress, and dozens of times I’ve been answered, and each time a “life-saver.”

But what about the third one - making forgiveness my priority? Well, that’s been a life-saver too, because I’ve been shafted, lied about and accused falsely during my years in the church, that made me so angry and resentful that several times I was ready to give up on life and God, and seriously consider leaving the church.

But Jesus, during the most excruciatingly agonizing time in his life, said, “Forgive them for they don’t know what they’re doing.” And for me to be able to say that too has been a life-saver for me. I don’t want to even think what my life would have been like if I’d been stuck with hurts and offences I couldn’t forgive.

I can say with total conviction, then, that those three things - calming my fears, peace of mind and being able to forgive - have saved my life, my marriage, my relationship with my kids, and my mental state and sanity in situations where I could have done irreparable damage.

So, what has Jesus’ resurrection done for me in terms that are easy to understand and relate to? It’s in those three areas, all of which have been life-savers for me, again and again. They lifted me out of the doldrums, and perhaps even from death. In Jesus’ resurrection, therefore, I’ve experienced being raised from the dead too. And what better proof of his resurrection can I give my kids than that?

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