

What If Jesus Didn't Rise From the Dead?

Rich Nathan
April 4-5, 2015
Easter Sunday
1 Corinthians 15.12-19

Every year like clockwork, right before Easter, the Discovery Channel, or the History Channel does a piece from some archeologist or historian that claims we have exciting new evidence of the actual bones of Jesus buried in a tomb outside of Jerusalem. Or we've discovered an ancient manuscript that may have been written by the Apostle Peter in which he admits that the disciples stole Jesus' body and reburied it somewhere else. And then the reporter breathlessly announces that this is the most exciting historical discovery in 2000 years.

And then after this little scrap of a manuscript with a few words in ancient Aramaic, or some bone box inscription is projected onto the screen, the reporter from the Discovery Channel, or the History Channel, will interview a seminary professor about the significance of this new evidence that's just come to light.

Invariably, right before Easter, you will hear a seminary professor or a Bishop from some church say, "It really doesn't matter if Jesus rose from the dead, or not. What really matters is the Golden Rule that he taught us – to love our neighbor as ourselves." Or you might hear them say something like, "Ultimately, it really doesn't matter if Jesus rose from the dead, or if this bone is really from his body. What matters is Jesus' example of non-violence which is so desperately needed in our war-torn world today."

The Golden Rule is important. And so is Jesus' example of non-violence. But is it the case that the resurrection of Jesus is a take it or leave it proposition? Or to put it more plainly, does it matter if Jesus of Nazareth is currently alive or if he died 2000 years ago and stayed dead?

I was thinking about this recently. It seems like the moment people place a topic in the realm of religion, the normal rules of logic and reason get thrown out the window. Scholars and historians and everyday people say things that would be absurd in any other context. But because we're talking about religion, people just smile and say, "I guess it makes sense; it shouldn't matter if Jesus is alive today or if he died 2000 years ago and stayed dead." In no other context would we say it doesn't matter if someone is alive or dead.

If it doesn't matter whether Jesus is alive or dead, then he is the only person in history about whom life or death doesn't matter

How many of you saw the movie Apollo 13 with Tom Hanks. Some of us may be old enough to remember the actual event.

Photo of Apollo 13

If you aren't familiar with the story, in a thumbnail, this Apollo mission was designed to fly 200,000 miles to the moon to explore a particular crater on the moon. Less than 56 hours into the launch, the astronauts heard a loud explosion and thought a meteorite had hit their spaceship. But the source of the bang was a ruptured oxygen tank which depleted the oxygen supply and crippled the supply of heat and water. They needed to come up with a way to remove carbon dioxide from the spaceship, otherwise the three astronauts would suffocate in outerspace.

How do you think the engineers at NASA, who worked around the clock to rescue these three astronauts, would have responded if you walked into the flight control room and said, "Hey, guys, relax. Go home. Get a good night's sleep. It doesn't matter if the astronauts are alive or dead up there. What matter is the spirit of scientific inquiry that they embodied. And it is the spirit of exploration that we need imitate." If you said something like that to the engineers who were feverishly trying to get these astronauts back alive, one of them probably would have taken out the slide rule in their pocket and beaten you bloody.

How many of you remember Baby Jessica?

Picture of Baby Jessica

Baby Jessica was 18 months old when she fell into a well in her aunt's backyard in Texas back in 1987. Rescue workers worked for 58 hours to free her from this 8" well. They dug a parallel shaft and then dug under the well and came up to rescue Baby Jessica. It was the birth of round-the-clock coverage from CNN. President Reagan said at the time that "everyone in America became godmothers and godfathers of Jessica while this was going on." When she was rescued alive, the nation cheered, pastors preached about it that Sunday – as an illustration of the lengths to which God has gone to rescue us. How do you think that Americans would have responded if during her rescue someone said, "You know, it really doesn't matter if Baby Jessica is alive or dead down there in the well. What matters is the spirit of compassion and love that we're all demonstrating as a nation."

Our society spends enormous resources; many folks risk their lives to rescue people from burning buildings, from earthquakes, fires and floods. Firemen and police officers put their lives on the line to save someone who is at risk. I think of the hundreds of firemen who lost their lives on 9/11 running into the World Trade Center to save people

after the terrorist attack. We spend enormous resources in hospitals everyday keeping people alive. Of course, it matters if someone is alive or dead.

And with no one else in history does it matter more if they are currently alive or if they died than Jesus of Nazareth. It is that simple premise that I'm going to attempt to prove to you today. That the resurrection of Jesus is not a take it or leave it proposition. It is of supreme importance. If he is alive, it changes everything. I've called today's talk "What If Jesus Didn't Rise From the Dead?" Let's pray.

1 Corinthians 15:12–19 (NIV)

12 But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? 13 If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. 14 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.

I am not going to talk today about the evidence for the resurrection of Jesus. I've done that in many previous Easter messages. If you are interested in hearing or reading one of those messages, go to vineyardcolumbus.org and type Resurrection into the search bar at the top. The top three results are sermons that I have preached on the resurrection.

Screen Shot

www.vineyardcolumbus.org

Screen Shot of Resurrection Search results

Or even better, you can check out the website of Dr. Gary Habermas,

Gary Habermas <http://www.garyhabermas.com/>

Dr. Gary Habermas has devoted his professional life to the examination of the relevant historical, philosophical and theological issues surrounding the death and resurrection of Jesus. He has been engaged in countless debates and discussions with scholars and atheists all around the world about the resurrection of Jesus. If you just go to his

website there is a ton of resources in which I believe that Gary Habermas offers persuasive evidence for the resurrection of Jesus.

We are also offering a series at our Cooper Road campus titled Questioning Christianity.

Questioning Christianity

Tuesdays, April 14 – June 2

6:30-8:30pm

Register and find out more information on our website:

www.VineyardColumbus.org

Questioning Christianity is an 8-part series for seekers, skeptics and those exploring the Christian faith. This series provides a safe space to explore big questions about life, God, and the claims of Christianity. Each evening begins by sharing a meal together around a table, which is followed by a short presentation on topics like, “Is There a Conflict Between Science and Christianity?” and “How Can A Loving God Allow So Much Suffering?” Then the rest of the evening is set aside for you to ask questions and share your thoughts around the table. So, if you are a skeptic or a seeker, please check out Questioning Christianity.

But that’s not my topic today. What I want to talk about is whether it matters if Jesus is currently alive, or if he died 2000 years ago and stayed dead.

Apparently, there were some in the ancient city of Corinth who were claiming there was no resurrection of the dead.

1 Corinthians 15:12 (NIV)

12 But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?

I’m not exactly sure why they were denying the resurrection. Some may have believed like the Jewish Sadducees of their day, or the secular materialists of today that there is no life after death. So they denied the resurrection. Others may have had the perspective that the resurrection was an inner spiritual experience and had nothing to do with the raising of a body from the dead. Like some church leaders today, they may have said that resurrection simply refers to an inward coming to the light, a new spiritual awareness. Still others may have said that the resurrection was simply talking about the immortality of the soul and has nothing to do with the resurrection of the body.

We’re not sure why the people in Corinth denied the possibility of bodily resurrection. But listen to Paul’s response:

1 Corinthians 15:13 (NIV)

13 If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised.

What Paul is saying in essence is

If Jesus didn't rise from the dead, then Christianity collapses

I read something a few years ago from the actor Billy Bob Thornton. He was talking about his religious beliefs and why he doesn't pray. Billy Bob Thornton said:

The thing is, most of the things I've heard in terms of mantras or meditations or anything don't really have words. They're more feelings. But I guess the Golden Rule is a good one, you know. I think that's one we should all live by. A lot of religions at their base, like Christianity, are really just variations of the Golden Rule.

You know this one, right? Basically all religions are just the same. You boil them all down and they basically teach that we should treat each other the way we want to be treated. That's what religion is all about.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ and distinguishes Christianity from all other religions. Jesus is different than every other religious founder because of his resurrection. The bones of Abraham and Mohammed and the Buddha and Confucius and Joseph Smith and the founder of every other religion are still here on earth. Jesus' tomb is empty because he bodily rose from the dead. Jesus is unique. Jesus is in a category of one!

What many folks don't realize, what Billy Bob Thornton doesn't realize, is that very few people outside of historians would have even heard of Jesus or what he taught about the Golden Rule, if he didn't rise from the dead. See, what most people don't realize is that historically there were a number of Jews who claimed to be the Messiah in the 1st and 2nd centuries AD. The two most famous included a man named Simon bar-Giora. How many of you have heard of Simon bar-Giora?

Simon bar-Giora

He tried to lead a Jewish rebellion against Rome which resulted in the destruction of Jerusalem and the burning of the Jewish Temple in 70 AD. Simon bar-Giora was put to death in front of a cheering Roman crowd in the city of Rome. How many of you have even heard of him? How many of you can repeat one thing that Simon bar-Giora ever said?

The most famous would-be Jewish Messiah was

Simon bar-Kokhba

Simon bar-Kokhba was the leader of the revolt against Rome in 135 AD. He was killed in the second Jewish-Roman war by the Romans. How many of you have heard of Simon bar-Kokhba? How many of you can quote two things that bar-Kokhba said?

If Jesus didn't rise from the dead, then he would have been one of more than a dozen Jewish Messianic pretenders who were just consigned to the dust bin of history. What made the Christian faith different from all the other messianic movements of the 1st and 2nd century AD, was what happened after the leader of the Christian movement was killed. What happened was he didn't stay dead. That's why we remember his words. So when people say what matters is not whether Jesus rose from the dead, what matters is what he said, the appropriate response is "You wouldn't know what Jesus said; nobody would have written it down." Jesus would not have had his followers writing Gospels about his statements and spreading his message all over the world, if like Simon bar-Giora or Simon bar-Kokhba Jesus was simply murdered by the Romans and didn't rise from the dead.

It was Jesus' resurrection that made his followers record Jesus' words and spread his message. See, the resurrection of Jesus is the bedrock upon which all Christianity rests. Take it away and Christianity collapses. Belief in the resurrection of Jesus is the one fundamental thing that distinguishes a Christian from a non-Christian. If you do not believe in the resurrection of Jesus, whatever else you are, you are not a Christian. The Apostle Paul says in Romans 10.9-10,

Romans 10:9–10 (NIV)

9 If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.

Have you ever seen one of those domino exhibits in a shopping mall where people have painstakingly set up 100,000-200,000 dominos and then they knock one down and every other domino falls? I want you to see this for a moment.

VIDEO-Dominos falling

If it was possible to knock down the resurrection of Jesus, if you could disprove it which no one ever has, there would be no Christianity—all the other dominos would fall. There would be no Christian teaching. There would be no remembrance of a Golden Rule, no Christian morality, no Christian hospitals, no Christian food pantries, no Christian art, no churches, nothing of the extraordinary blessing that Christianity has bequeathed to the world.

What was the world like before Jesus rose from the dead? You know, it was a dangerous thing to be conceived in the ancient world. Child sacrifice was common in Israel, before the Jewish conquest. The Canaanites used to offer up their children to the ancient gods Baal and Molech. Offering one's children to the gods was a common practice. Mayans used to slaughter their children in Mexico. Sometimes children were thrown into the mouth of a volcano. Throughout the history of the world, it has been a dangerous thing for a baby to be conceived. In Alaska, the Eskimos would take their babies and put them on ice flows, especially if they were baby girls. In ancient Rome and Greece, unwanted children, especially baby girls, would often be left out, exposed to the elements. Life outside of the Christian world has been exceedingly cheap.

To Jesus every life was precious – the lives of the poor, the lives of children, the lives of the elderly, the lives of the sick. To Jesus, life was a sacred gift. And this whole view of life as a sacred gift is foundational to the whole way our society is structured. It is fundamental to our criminal law, to our willingness to intervene in cases of genocide around the world. It is the simple idea that life is sacred.

Let me mention just one thing Jesus gave to the world – an amazing concern for the weak. But not only in Jesus do we have a view of the sacredness of life, but also in his coming we have this amazingly unique concern for the weak. The life of Christ was characterized most profoundly by a deep passionate care for the least in the society – the sick, the elderly, widows, orphans, lepers, prostitutes. In the wake of Christ's resurrection, his followers spread this concern for the weakest in our society to the world.

I think of former Christian seminary president named Robertson McQuilkin. He used to be the president of Columbia Bible College and Seminary. He was a wonderful conference speaker and writer, who left his seminary position to care for his wife, Muriel, who suffered with Alzheimer's for the last twenty years of her life. He has written a wonderful little book on living with a wife who has Alzheimer's. The book is called "A Promise Kept." I would highly recommend it for any of you who have parents or relatives suffering from Alzheimer's.

But there is this precious little incident in Dr. McQuilkin's book in which he says that he was traveling by plane with his wife. His plane was delayed in Atlanta for a few hours. That is a real challenge to be in a strange airport with a person who has severe Alzheimer's - every few minutes the same questions and the same answers. What are we doing here? When are we going home? How are we going to get home? And every few minutes they would take this fast-paced walk down the terminal. His wife, he said, was always a speed walker. He had to practically jog to keep up with her to keep her from getting lost as she turned into stores and wandered around.

They finally sat down in the waiting area by their gate and he said there was a very attractive woman working on her laptop computer who kept glancing up at them from

her terminal. And then as she typed, she mumbled something to Dr. McQuilkin. He said, "Excuse me? What was that?" She said, "Oh, watching you with your wife, I just began wondering would I ever find a man who would love me the way you love your wife?"

What a difference the life, death, and resurrection of Christ has made! What an extraordinary legacy he has left behind! The strong taking care of the weak!

Because Jesus wasn't just one of the many Jewish failed Messiahs, but came back to life, the strong, the powerful, the wealthy sometimes are willing to take a backseat to and deny themselves and promote the interest of the weak, the least, the last, and the lost.

Does it matter if Jesus rose from the dead or not?

IF Jesus didn't rise from the dead, then Jesus' death on the cross does not save us from our sins.

1 Corinthians 15:17

17 And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins.

Every Sunday in churches of every denomination—Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Episcopalian, Methodist, Vineyard, and on a less frequent basis Baptist and so on—practice something we call Communion or the Eucharist.

Someone gets up and takes bits of bread and a cup of wine and pronounces the words Jesus spoke at his Last Supper. So we take the bread and we break it and say, "on the night he was betrayed, after supper Jesus took the bread and after he had given thanks he broke it and said,

"This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

And in the same way, he took the cup and after he had given thanks, he said,

"This cup is the new covenant in my blood, poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. As often as you drink it you do so in remembrance of me."

But what does this communion meal mean? What does it mean that Jesus gave his body for us?

That his blood was shed, "for the forgiveness of sins?"

To understand Jesus' meaning, we have to go back to the Old Testament and the way sin was forgiven by God for the Jewish people. Back then, if a person wanted to have their sins forgiven they would go to the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem with a live animal

like a lamb. They would confess their sins in the presence of a Priest. Then the Priest would put his hands on the lamb's head, symbolically transferring the person's sins to the lamb. Then the Priest would cut the lamb's neck in essence saying—"This lamb is dying in your place. It's death is paying for your sins."

But no animal could ever be a substitute for a human being. So every year people would have to bring another lamb and then another and then another to pay for their sins.

When Jesus came, a prophet named John the Baptist pointed at him and said:

John 1:29

"Behold, the Lamb of God, who has taken away the sins of the world."

Jesus was God's appointed lamb. He was the perfect ultimate substitutionary sacrifice for our sins. When we confess our sins, like that Old Testament Priest, we are transferring them from us onto the head of Christ. Like those lambs in the Temple, Christ's blood is shed in place of ours.

But how do we know that Christ's sacrifice was effective? How do we know that his death on a cross really paid for our sins and that the guilt of our sins can be transferred from us to the head of Christ?

After all, thousands of Jews were crucified by Rome. How do we know that the death of this one Jewish man, Jesus of Nazareth paid for our sins? Because of his resurrection!

Jesus' resurrection was God's Certificate of Approval in which God in essence said, "I accept the sacrifice of Jesus as the full and final payment for all of your sins."

Romans 4:25 says,

Romans 4:25

25 He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.

How does Jesus' death and resurrection save us? Let me give you another picture of salvation.

Are you familiar with the WWII story of the raid on Cabanatuan (Caba-nashwan).

Picture of the POW Camp Cabanatuan

It was January 1945 and in what has been called the most heroic mission of WWII, 121 volunteers from the US Army Rangers set out to rescue more than 500 Allied prisoners

of war. The POWs were American and Filipino men who survived the Bataan Death March through the Philippine jungles.

Picture of the Bataan Death March

Thousands of Filipinos and Americans died during that Death March. And those who survived were imprisoned in this notoriously brutal POW Camp Cabanatuan (Cabanashwan). To free their fellow soldiers the Rangers snuck behind enemy lines. They launched a surprise attack on the Japanese camp. The assault lasted 30 minutes and freed hundreds of soldiers with a few American casualties. It became the topic of a best-seller titled Ghost Soldiers: An Epic Account of WWII's Greatest Rescue Mission.

Picture of the Rescue Team

This is a picture of salvation: You and I are prisoners of war—held captive by sin and by Satan. Jesus went behind enemy lines, and at the price of his own life, set us free from our captivity. He threw open the prison doors by his death and resurrection.

But suppose someone said, I don't want to leave the prison. I like it here and even though prison life is hard, and even though the prison camp gates are open, I want to stay. I'm comfortable here. I know the routine. Life outside can be challenging.

Staying in a prisoner of war camp, after the gates have been opened is what it's like if you hear the message that your sins can be forgiven—that you can have a relationship with the risen Jesus Christ that will change your life for the better and you say no—I'm just going to stay as I am. I know the routine. I don't want to be saved by Jesus. I don't want to change.

But if Jesus didn't rise from the dead, his death on the cross does not save us from our sins.

Does it matter if Jesus is alive or if he died 2,000 years ago and stayed dead?

Here is the third and final thing. If Jesus didn't rise from the dead, then Christian funerals are a tragic joke.

If Jesus didn't rise from the dead, then Christian funerals are a tragic joke

Paul writes in v. 18:

1 Corinthians 15:18 (NIV)

18 Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost.

This past week a 34-year old Vineyard pastor from the Central Vineyard Church here in Columbus, Matthias Beyer, had a massive brain aneurysm and is teetering on the edge

of life and death. Matthias has a young wife named Kim, and two little boys – a 3-year old and a 5-month old, both of whom will grow up without ever knowing their dad.

What makes the potential death of this young man even more tragic is that Matthias' sister, Daniela Beyer, was an aid worker, who was killed in Afghanistan by gunmen along with nine other aid workers back in 2010. Daniela was a linguist and translator in German, English and Russian who also spoke Dari and was learning Pashto. She worked for the International Assistance Mission (IAM) between 2007-2009 doing linguistic research and joined the eye camp so she could translate for women patients.

If Matthias dies, Matthias' parents will have lost two children in the prime of life – one at age 34, the other at age 35. And they will attend another Christian funeral.

Now, imagine at the funeral the singer gets up and sings Julie Miller's contemporary gospel song, "All My Tears."

VIDEO – All My Tears by Selah

*When I die, don't cry for me
In my Father's arms, I'll be
And wounds this world left on my soul
Will all be healed and I'll be whole*

*Sun and moon will be replaced
With the light of Jesus' face
And I will be not be ashamed
For my Savior knows my name*

*It don't matter where you bury me
I'll be home and I'll be free
It don't matter where I lay
All my tears, be washed away*

*So weep not for me, my friends
When my time below does end
For my life belongs to Him
Who will raise the dead again*

*It don't matter where you bury me
'Cos I'll be home and I'll be free
It don't matter where I lay
All my tears, be washed away*

And then after they are done singing "All My Tears" this Christian funeral closes with Amazing Grace which is sung at so many Christian funerals and we hear the last verse of Amazing Grace:

*When we've been there ten thousand years
Bright shining as the sun
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we first begun*

What does any of this mean, if Jesus did not come back to life? How will we be with God for eternity, bright shining as the sun, unless the dead are raised? What sense does it make to sing "For my life belongs to him, who will raise the dead again," if there is no resurrection?

A few years ago I did the funeral of a young man from our congregation. His name was Jacob Tate. I had a particularly soft spot in my heart for Jacob. When he was born I was still practicing law. I got a call that a little baby was going to be born who needed a home. In those days I was doing a lot of adoptions. So I called my friends at church, Jim and Jan Tate. They had been praying about adoption. So when Jacob was born, Jim, Jan and I drove down to a hospital in another county. I went into the hospital and picked up little baby Jacob and then I had the opportunity to give him to Jim and Jan.

I watched Jacob grow up in our church – as a toddler, as a kindergartner, elementary school, in middle school and high school. Fast forward from his birth 21 years. Jacob is now married and joined the military. He was deployed to Afghanistan. He was on foot patrol and an IED exploded and killed him.

I will tell you, friends, there are very few things that are harder for me as a pastor than when I have to conduct a funeral for a young adult or a teenager, or for a child. When I see that little white box with a child's body go into the ground, and I stand up there and say to mom, to dad, to grandparents, and to siblings: "This is not the end; you will see your loved one again," I am not up there just offering pious, empty words of comfort. I am offering people the truth. Jesus was not lying when he said in John 14.1-3,

John 14:1–3 (NIV)

14 "Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me.
2 My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.

If Jesus is not raised from the dead, then the idea that he went ahead to prepare a home for those who have died in him is a myth. It is just a fairytale. There is no homecoming for the dead because there is no home. And there is no home if Christ is not raised – no heaven, no hell, no eternal peace, nothing after the grave, if Christ is not raised. And not only is there no homecoming if Christ is not raised, there is no great reunion.

What I tell spouses and parents, what I tell siblings, what I tell grieving children, what I tell grandparents when I do a funeral is that death is not the end. There will be a great reunion. Death just means that I don't get to see my loved one right now. But death does not mean I won't see my loved one forever. For a Christian, death just means that for a period of time we must bear with the ache and grief of having our loved one apart from us. But then when the great day of resurrection comes, our tears of sorrow will be turned into tears of joy.

But if Christ is not raised, there is no great reunion and no tears of joy. Widows will never see their husbands again. Children will not see their parents. Matthias' wife will not see Matthias again. Jim and Jan Tate will not see their son Jacob. And none of us will see our departed loved ones again. The resurrection of Jesus from the dead is the Christian answer to the tragedy of death.

But Paul says in response to this in v. 20:

1 Corinthians 15:20 (NIV)

20 But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

Because Jesus was resurrected, the only one in the history of the world to be resurrected from the dead (others have been resuscitated, but no one else came back to life in an utterly transformed eternal body. Every resuscitated person ultimately dies), we can have a relationship with the living Jesus today, Easter weekend. We can be saved by him. We can be changed by him. We can talk with him. We can be guided by him. Because Jesus is resurrected from the dead, he can make a difference in your life, and in my life today.

Because Jesus is raised from the dead, death is not the last word. The last word is resurrection. Death is not the final page. Death is simply the turning of the page. Matthias's wife, Kim, and his parents will see Matthias and their daughter, Daniela, again. Jim and Jan will see their son, Jacob, again. And every grieving mom and dad, who have lost their children in Christ, you will see your kids again one day.

Because Christ was raised from the dead there will be a great reunion, friends. If your loved one was attached to Christ, and you place your faith in Christ, if you put your full confidence in Christ's saving ability, you will see one another again. There will be a great reunion and a great homecoming.

And because Jesus was raised from the dead our sins can be forgiven and we can enter a life changing relationship with the risen Christ today. Jesus is alive and this Easter you can know him!

Gospel Call.

What If Jesus Didn't Rise From the Dead?

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Easter Sunday
1 Corinthians 15.12-19

- I. If it doesn't matter whether Jesus is alive or dead, then he is the only person in history about whom life or death doesn't matter
- II. If Jesus didn't rise from the dead, then Christianity collapses
- III. If Jesus didn't rise from the dead, then Jesus' death on the cross does not save us from our sins
- IV. If Jesus didn't rise from the dead, then Christian funerals are a tragic joke