

Risen Indeed!
Luke 24:1-12

In the days before television, a radio programme 'Consider Your Verdict' fascinated me. The listener was required to evaluate evidence presented and whether one's verdict coincided with that of the court. It made for entertaining 'theatre of the mind'. The evidence for the resurrection transcends the realm of entertainment. It demands a verdict. "The message of Easter is either the supreme fact in history or else a gigantic hoax" argues Prof J.N.D Anderson. It is literally a matter of life and death not just a comforting story. The Apostle Paul put it this way: "If Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God." (1 Cor 15:14,15)

The resurrection of Jesus has several implications viz.

i. *Change in Jesus*

"He is not here he has risen" (v6)

The change in Jesus led in turn to a change in the disciples.

ii. *Bodily resurrection*

"They did not find the body of Jesus" (v3)

Unlike Lazarus who was resuscitated with the same body as before, only to die again, Jesus' resurrected body was transformed, never to die again.

iii. *Resurrection connected with the crucifixion*

The resurrection is God's seal of approval, the death of Jesus on the cross vindicated thereby.

In light of the above perhaps we need to revise our thinking about the resurrection:

i. *Death*

Death for the disciples seemed the end of everything, final and decisive. However, the resurrection changed all that. Instead of a dark door slammed in one's face, for the believer it presents an open door into the presence of God.

ii. *Jesus*

Initially two despairing disciples walking away from Jerusalem depicted Jesus merely in human terms, "a prophet powerful in word and deed" (Lk 24:19). Later their eyes were opened and they could exclaim, "It is true! The Lord has risen" (v34).

iii. *Future*

The resurrection points forward to the Great Day when God winds up history and calls humanity to account. "God has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him [Jesus] from the dead" (Acts 17:31).

The resurrection goes hand in hand with a call to repentance and the offer of forgiveness. The promise of the risen Saviour still stands, "Here I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me." (Rev 3:21)

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