

How Christ's Resurrection Can Result in Your Total Transformation

Easter means nothing if you're fully satisfied with the way things are. But if your heart, your emotions, your memories, your body, your marriage, your relationships, your character, your purpose, your future, your hope could use some transformation, then Easter is for you. If it weren't for Easter, giving up would be the only reasonable choice. Easter is the season when you can know again the path from Christ's resurrection to your transformation.

The first Good Friday seemed anything but good. It was messy, terrifying, bloody, violent, confusing and apparently hopeless to those who experienced it firsthand. We think our world is dark now, and it is. But sickness, poverty, violence, social division, oppression, slavery, ignorance and fear were just as real 2000 years ago. And it was right in the middle of all the mess that Jesus came and died.

But He didn't stay dead! Out of His death came life. Jesus' resurrection confirmed that the war had been won. "It is finished" (John 19:30b).

Most of you who will see this message are Christians. You know the Easter story. But the most important question is whether Jesus' resurrection life is living in *you*.

What Good Friday and Easter Mean for Me

Good Friday has become immensely meaningful to me. It was at a Good Friday service years ago that I met Jesus. At that moment, I became acutely aware that some part of me was now alive that had never been alive before. Being truly born again was the first and most critical step in my own lasting

transformation. After that I could begin to hear God's voice. It was the start of cleaning me up and changing me from the inside out, one step at a time.

Easter also reminds me that because Jesus is alive, we can live also. Because of Easter, my husband's death was not the end of his story. Christ's resurrection means that death will die, and those of us who trust in Jesus will live forever. "Oh death, where is your sting? Oh grave, where is your victory?" (1 Cor. 15:55).

What does this mean for you? If some part of you needs to experience real and lasting change, this is where it starts. Nothing else is possible until you've been born again. That's when you begin to experience the path from Christ's resurrection to your transformation.

Are You Born Again?

The language of "born again" comes directly from Jesus' nighttime conversation with Nicodemus: "Truly, truly I say to you, unless a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3).

Perhaps you grew up in church and heard that language all your life, but something's not working. I would ask you ask the same question I heard at that Good Friday service: "Do you know that you know that you know that you are born again? If not, it's time to take care of that right now."

Perhaps you're trying to "be good," but realize you've never met Jesus personally. Something is making you hungry inside for something more, and you feel God pulling on your heart. It's time to say yes to Jesus right now.

We've been talking about real and lasting change over the past few weeks, and we will continue to do so. This is a process, and God's not finished with you yet!

But if things seem stalled, if you sense there's transformation you need and it's not happening, this is the first thing to get right. Use this Easter season to check your heart. Is Jesus your Lord and Savior? Has He made you alive on the inside? Have you declared, before heaven and earth, that you have decided to follow Jesus?

Further Resources

If you're not certain you are born again, take care of that right now. Being born again is something that happens between you and Jesus. It's a real and private moment between you and the God of the universe. If you feel Him pulling on your heart to take care of this, pray this now:

Dear Lord Jesus, I'm a sinner, and I need you. Jesus, I believe You are the Son of God. I believe you came to earth and lived and died and rose again. I believe You are now at God's right hand in heaven, and that You are coming again. I ask You to forgive my sins, make me clean and fill me with Your Holy Spirit. I take you as my Savior and my Lord, forever. Amen.

This is the start of your transformation journey. It's Step One in a lifestyle that brings real change. Here are a few additional resources you will find helpful:

- **My First Steps:** a pdf helping you understand the born-again experience from the Bible, and some of the initial steps to take going forward.
- **:** put this app on your smartphone if you haven't already. Check out the reading plans, perhaps this one on Unlimited Salvation.
- **10 Steps Toward Christ:** easy-to-read and helpful book if you need to understand more about the basics of the Christian life.

Taking care of this first, most important step means you're

part of the family of God. And it opens the door to the ongoing transformation you need, and that God wants for you. And we'll talk more about those ongoing steps next week.

Happy Easter!

Your Turn: Are you absolutely certain you're born again? What does Easter mean for you? Leave a comment below.