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## Lessons From A Empty Tomb

*Mark 16:1-6*

Easter is a time to remember the Death and the resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ. We pause as the grass regains it's green, and the flowers begin to bloom, to recall the dark morning after the death of our Lord as the women made their way to the tomb/grave of our Lord. Let join them....

All four gospels speak of the tomb in which Jesus was laid as one owned by Joseph of Arimathea, who was secretly a disciple of Jesus. Unique to Mark's gospel, however, is the surprise of Pilate when he discovers how quickly Jesus had died. If there is any doubt as to the reality of his death on the cross, the centurion affirms his death to Pilate and the body of Jesus is entrusted to Joseph for burial. The gospel of Mark chapter 15 ends with both Mary's witnessing the burial of Jesus in the tomb and the tomb's owner rolling the stone against the entrance.

These three women are bringing spices to the grave as a sign of love and respect it is much like today we take flowers to a grave. Important for our consideration today is that the resurrection story from Mark is the only account in which we are given insight into the conversation of the women on the way to the tomb. Evidently, in the midst of their intentional preparation to gather the spices and plan their sunrise visit to the grave, they realized while in route that they had overlooked an important arrangement....."Who will roll the stone away?" They had witnessed Joseph of Arimathea sealing the tomb, they knew that it would be



blocking the entrance, but they had evidently forgotten details and the decisions that need to be made that to enlist the help of someone that morning.

Incidentally, the “rolling stone” tombs in Jesus day would have been sealed with a disc-shaped limestone rock. I had always pictured a round boulder but, study of tomb in Jesus day reveal, a “Frisbee-shaped” rock would have rolled along a “track” to open and close the tomb’s entrance.

Scripture reveals, the stone had already been rolled away and, as the women entered the tomb, their reaction was one of fear and bewilderment. After seeing and, learning from a man dressed in white (whom other gospels identify as an angel of the Lord) of Jesus’ resurrection, the women are then commanded to go and tell the disciples. Out of their fear and bewilderment, however, the women say nothing to anyone - - at least not immediately.

It is a glorious story - - one that has given comfort and hope and joy to all who believe. It is also a story for all who have, on occasion, journeyed to the grave of a loved one. For just as the Son of God could not escape earthly death, neither can we. And so, this Easter weekend, I invite you to walk with me the pathway that leads to the grave... As journey together, I would invite us to consider two things...

Think of possible conversations, or thoughts one might have on the way to the burial grave of their love one. In reading the gospel of Mark this week, I began pondering the various conversations that I have had with others as we drove to a cemetery. Some of us see the grave as a sign of defeat - - a sign of sadness and grief. That is only natural. But many of us, when our loved ones die, become so focused on taking care of the “duties” surrounding the funeral arrangements and caring for family and friends that we miss the message of hope and joy that God’s angels would speak to us. This is certainly understandable, for in the midst of our shock and bewilderment, we become so consumed with the

we miss out on the message of eternity. Like the women, we may become so focused on the tasks surrounding death that we miss the message of eternity. After understanding resurrection, now every time we journey to the grave hereafter, we have an opportunity to encounter God’s ultimately defeat over death, a journey to the grave should point us to the joy of a heavenly reunion - - and a place where the joy of our past will pale in comparison to the joy of eternity. Should your life’s journey take you to the grave of a loved one this year, I pray that you will hear the voice of God’s messenger - - **“HE IS RISEN”** so because of Christ so too can our love ones rise.

Easter invites us to tell others what we have discovered. What a shame it would be if we sensed the true meaning of this day, heard the message of the angel and went away in our fear and bewilderment and told no one.... Today, as we receive the promises of this day, may we go forth with joy from place to place telling the promise of Resurrection Day to all who will listen.

Every year in Jerusalem, the Orthodox priests gather with their people outside the church of the Holy Sepulchre, built over the site where Jesus is said to have been crucified and from which he rose from death. Leading a processional, the priests circle the entire structure three times - - one time for each day that Jesus was in the grave. Then, assembling the people inside the church building, the priest proclaims with joy at sunrise, **“Christ the Lord is Risen today!”** to which the people respond, **“He is risen indeed!”** This is done three times - - one time for each day Jesus was buried in the tomb. We started this article with HE is **“Risen,”** so, I would like us to end it with that proclamation and may all of our journeys to the grave be filled with the hope and joy of resurrection.

*Christ the Lord is risen today: He is risen indeed!*

*Christ the Lord is risen today! He is risen indeed!*

*Christ the Lord is risen today! He is risen indeed!*

## *Sharing Christ with Your Neighbors at Easter*

*Every believer is to share in winning souls  
(John 15:16; Matthew 28:19-20)*



This Easter we are preparing the big Sunday dinner. The family will be getting together for Easter egg hunts and taking pictures of the kids in their beautiful suits and dresses. We are remembering the trial and persecution of Jesus Christ. During this time of the year it is a good time to share Christ with others. Share the true meaning of Palm Sunday and Passion Week; The death of our Saviour. Sharing Christ with other people is one of the most



important things we can do as Christians. We are the human instruments through which Christ reaches others. Jesus can save and heal, but He needs our voices and our lives to spread the Good news.

Before we can share with others, our life must be an example. Our lives should be a witness to others that Jesus is Lord and Savior. The way we speak, act and live our lives is a powerful way to show that faith works and that Jesus is alive. We should be obedient to God, positive words and good attitudes make us stand out in a world filled with darkness. When we love others, sharing a kind act or an encouraging word, we help others to draw near to Jesus.

**Acts 1:8** says “*But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*” This lets us know that each of us is to be a witness to our neighbor and the lost. If you claim the Lord Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior then you are called to share your faith with others. First, be prayerful in your approach and the right moment to talk to someone about Christ. If they see it in the way you live, sometimes they will come to you. Be ready in faith and prayer. Tell people what God has done for you. Share your testimony; use your personal experience to show them how Jesus made a difference in your life. Mark 16:15 gives you great authority. When Jesus said “***Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature,***” He was expressing His great faith in your ability to share Him with those around you.

Have compassion in dealing with the needs of others. Jesus was always moved with compassion when He saw people's needs, and He is still moved by compassion. Let people know that God loves them. He doesn't want to see them suffering, sick, discouraged and lost in sin. Pay attention to what people need and help them see how those needs are met in Jesus. Help people understand their need for a savior and the love and grace God offers. Romans 3:23 tells us that all of us have sinned and come short of the glory of God. **John 1:12** says, “***But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believed in His name.***” We should encourage people to make a decision for Christ. Don't put the decision-making off until later. Off to pray with them right then, right now. Jesus is the only way to heaven and to God. Today is the day of Salvation. For each of us becoming a Christian must be a personal decision- a very individual- oriented commitment to Jesus. But personal is not private. Faith in Christ should not be private. Salvation is a universal matter that relates to the Gospel. We are to share our faith with the world, beginning with our neighbors and friends.

One of the chief things is the joy of sharing Christ with others. Sharing your faith isn't so much a program or a technique as it is a passion of the heart. So ask God to give you a burden, a desire, a passion to talk to your neighbors, friends and family about Jesus. Ask God to give you a passion for people. When you go to them be authentic, be real. People can identify more with real experiences you've had in your life. So don't be afraid to let them know how God is working in those ordinary, everyday experiences. People aren't looking for perfection; they are looking for someone who is real.

I went on the internet and found these pointers to help you share Christ with your neighbors;

1. Study the scriptures: ABC's All have sinned (Romans 3:23) Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 16:30-31) Confess your sins (Romans 10:9)
2. Pray. Ask God to give you someone who needs to know about Him. Ask believing and then watch for the one God will send.

3. Be keenly aware of all that is going on around you. Approach people on their level of need.
4. Go with God. You are not alone, God said He would never leave you nor forsake you (Hebrews 13:5)
5. Trust God to give you the words to say. (Matthew 10:19-20) ***"You will be given what to say, for it will not be you speaking, but the spirit of your Father speaking through you."***

This topic is also befitting to our 2016 theme; Being fishers of men,, going out to tell the world of the goodness of Christ. We are fishers in a higher sense, in a more noble employment and to a much better purpose. Our net is the gospel and the sea is the world and the fish are souls of man. So put on your fishing gear and let's go fishing!!

***John 4:35*** say ***"Lift up your eyes and see that the fields are white for harvest."*** So go out and introduce as many people to Jesus. When it comes to being a witness, the only way you can fail is not to share Christ at all.

*Sister Priscilla Horton*



*The Easter Lilies  
adorning the Pulpit area  
were donated by the  
following Members...*

*Brother Patrick and Sister Gloria Turner*

*Pastor and First Lady Burwell*

*Deacon Walter and Deaconess Loraine Cordule*

*Deacon Howard and Mother Loellis Miller*

*Minister Montrice and Brenda Bethea*

*Sister Gwen Garth*

*Sister Priscilla Horton*

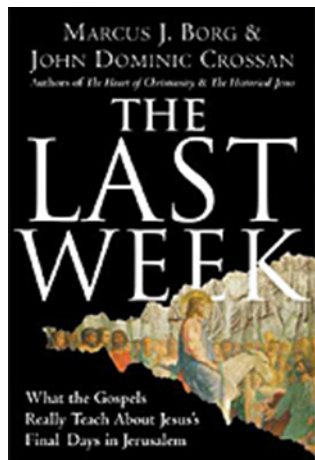
*Sister Mamie Sanders*

*Sister Nicole Garth*

*Sister Emma Caudle*

*Sister LaToya Pugh*

## A Book Review *by Dr. Jeffery Lehman*



# THE LAST WEEK

What the Gospels Really Teach About Jesus's Final Days in Jerusalem  
by Marcus J. Borg, John Dominic Crossan

*Top Jesus scholars Marcus J. Borg and John Dominic Crossan join together to reveal a radical and little-known Jesus. As both authors reacted to and responded to questions about Mel Gibson's blockbuster The Passion of the Christ, they discovered that many Christians are unclear on the details of events during the week leading up to Jesus's crucifixion.*

*Using the gospel of Mark as their guide, Borg and Crossan present a day-by-day account of Jesus's final week of life. They begin their story on Palm Sunday with two triumphal entries into Jerusalem. The first entry, that of Roman governor Pontius Pilate leading Roman soldiers into the city, symbolized military strength. The second heralded a new kind of moral hero who was praised by the people as he rode in on a humble donkey. The Jesus introduced by Borg and Crossan is this new moral hero, a more dangerous Jesus than the one enshrined in the church's traditional teachings.*

*The Last Week depicts Jesus giving up his life to protest power without justice and to condemn the rich who lack concern for the poor. In this vein, at the end of the week Jesus marches up Calvary, offering himself as a model for others to do the same when they are confronted by similar issues. Informed, challenged, and inspired, we not only meet the historical Jesus, but meet a new Jesus who engages us and invites us to follow him.*

Marcus Borg (*Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time*) and John Dominic Crossan (*Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography*) set out to explore the last week in Jesus' life against the backdrop of Roman imperial control. Their purpose is not to attempt a historical reconstruction of what has become known as the "Passion" or suffering of Jesus, but to probe the things Jesus was passionate about. The text they use is the Gospel of Mark, the earliest to be written, the most succinct, and the one with the most time markers for the week's events.

In their comments on Palm Sunday, Borg and Crossan discuss the domination system in Jerusalem that was characterized by political oppression, economic exploitation, and religious legitimization. Jesus was sharply critical of the temple in the city and its collaboration with the domination system. His message was to repent, not in the sense of contrition, but "to embark upon a way that goes beyond the mind that you have." Jesus brought hope to peasants who desperately needed a way out of their misery. His preaching about the Kingdom of God emphasizes the present moment, not life after death.

One of the heroines of Mark is the woman who comes to Bethany and pours oil on Jesus' head. Borg and Crossan point out that compared to the twelve disciples with all their failures, this unnamed woman is not only the first believer, she is also a model leader. Let's hope a few thousand sermons can explore exactly what that means! She stands beside Mary Magdalene, who is described on these pages as "the most important of Jesus'

women followers." Here again the rebel from Nazareth went against the grain of both the Jewish and Gentile cultures of his time in which women were subordinated.

The passion of Jesus for the kingdom of God was a threat to the men atop the domination systems. He also spoke about God's passion for justice, something that doesn't seem to go down well in our times either. Borg and Crossan conclude, "Good Friday and Easter, death and resurrection together, are a central image in the New Testament for the path to a transformed self. The path involves dying to an old way of being and being reborn into a new way of being. Good Friday and Easter are about this path, the path of dying rising, of being born again."

Once again Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan have given progressives and other Christians insights into Jesus that expand upon the more common understandings of the meaning of his life and death. Their journey through the last week of his life is challenging and profoundly inspiring. To walk in this Jesus' footsteps would really be something!

The edition includes a reader's guide for individual as well as small study groups. A unique and fascinating book for students of the bible study, especially those who mean to follow the Prince of Peace. Borg has given use a progressive, detailed way of understanding Jesus's Last Week which will provides you with the details for a faith based biblical study for countless generations to come.

## Jesus' Resurrection...

As a child growing up I looked at Easter like a weird second Christmas. I always got a brand new bright colored dress, new shoes or sandals and pretty lace socks. I remember the night before Easter Sunday my hair was pressed and greased, then rolled to keep my curls in place.

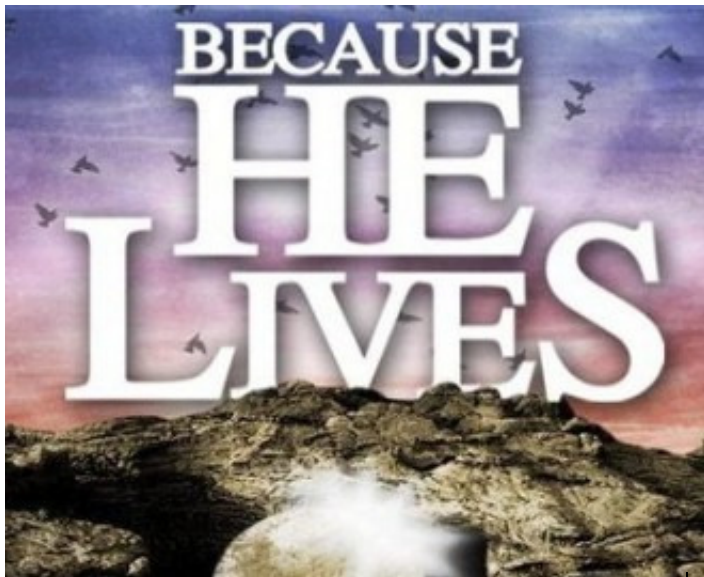
Easter morning, I would wake up to an Easter basket filled with candy and toys but unlike Christmas I couldn't open it until after church. I got dressed from head to toe in my new Easter clothes and then I got shiny ribbons for my hair to match my new outfit. Off to church we went. Even at church Easter was extra special. The church was decorated in bright spring time colors, we sang different songs than what I heard throughout the year and all the kids had an Easter speech presentation.

I also remembered, as a child being frustrated with why church always took so long on Easter Sunday. I remember thinking don't they know our Easter presents are at home waiting on us and the longer we stay at church the more time I lose with finding the most eggs when it's time for our Easter egg hunt.

As I got older, I then learned Easter had a very different meaning. It was not about the brand new clothes; it was not about the Easter basket nor was it about the Easter egg hunt.

I learned Easter was about the resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. God sent his son to bear the sacrifice of our sin debt. By law God's punishment for sin is death. God arranged it that we not pay this debt ourselves, for it would cost us our life and any future of a relationship with God. Therefore, through mercy Jesus was sent to endure our punishment. Jesus's death is fulfillment of that law. The resurrection of Jesus is the promise of everlasting life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. John 3:16. Jesus lives so that we might also live. And all at once every Sunday school lesson, every Easter speech, every song and every sermon tells the story of the loving sacrifice God made; that you and I through Christ Jesus might have salvation.

*Sister LaToya Hives*



God sent his son, they called him Jesus,  
He came to love, heal and forgive.  
He lived and died to buy my pardon,  
An empty grave is there  
to prove my savior lives.

...

Because he lives I can face tomorrow  
Because he lives All fear is gone  
Because I know he holds the future  
And life is worth the living  
Just because he lives  
*By Bill Gaither, Guy Penrod*

**STICKING TO A BUDGET:**

One proven method is paying in cash as much as possible. People are willing to pay more for an item or service when paying by credit card rather than cash. People are also more willing to splurge when paying by credit card than cash.

To curb frivolous spending try setting aside a weekly amount in an envelope for discretionary items like eating out. When the envelope runs out you are done.

**SAVING MORE MONEY:**

To make saving money easier have HR or your bank direct a portion of each paycheck into a savings account. 5% is a good start. That way you never see it. Give your savings a boost with any gifts, tax refunds or a portion of bonuses. If you get a raise or finish paying off a loan add that money too. Your goal should be to build up three to six months of income for living expenses or emergencies.

**PAY DOWN DEBT:**

Pick one debt with the highest interest rate and focus on paying that one down first. If that's too much pay the debt or credit card with the lowest balance to have a victory under your belt.

**Ardean Green, ABR**

Associate Broker

Rise Real Estate

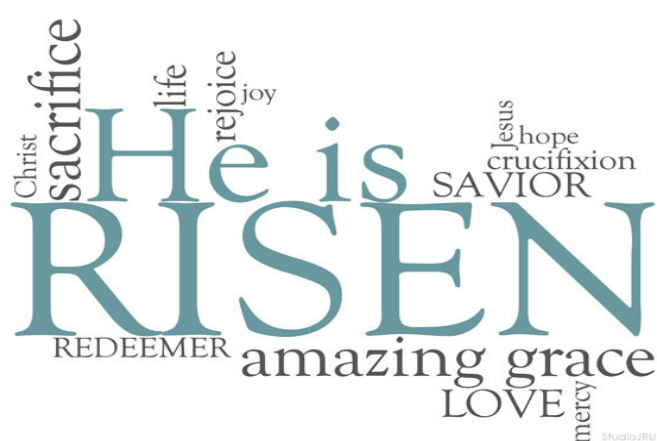
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# JUST A LITTLE NOTE...

## KUDOS



I am one proud and excited mother. I want to share with you that my son **Marlen Moore** finished high school in December 2015 as an early graduate. His graduation ceremony will be held on May 24, 2016 @ 7pm @

the VBCC. He is currently enrolled at Calhoun Community College studying Criminal Justice and working full time at night with Frito Lay in Fayetteville, Tn as a GS Lead Warehouse person. As a hobby, Marlon enjoys hunting. While hunting last season he managed to capture his first big 10 point deer. I am so honored to call him my son. CLASS OF 2016

Christy Lamar

Congratulations to **Kelsie Boley** on making the "A" honor roll. She is also a member of the

Tanner Elementary School Scholar's Bowl Team. Kelsie also participates in a youth basketball team and came in second place for Limestone County for 11-12 year old girls. Most recently, Kelsie has qualified to participate in the highly selective 4th-6th Grade Talent Search through Duke University because of her high performance on a standardized test.



Congratulations **Miracle Scott** on being selected to the National Juniors Honor Society. She received her pin and certificate on Wednesday, March

16, 2016. Also, congratulations on making the A-B Honor roll.



**Brother Malik Turner**  
**Brother Jason Winslow**  
**Sister Lolita Winslow**  
**Brother Tillman Stone**  
**Brother Damien Turner**  
**Sister Charlene Turner**  
**Brother Darius Turner**  
**Sister Camille Turner**

## Planting Your Spring Garden



For the Garden of your daily living

Plant three rows of peas

1. Peace of Mind
2. Peace of Heart
3. Peace of Soul

Plant four rows of squash

1. Squash gossip
2. Squash indifference
3. Squash grumbling
4. Squash selfishness

Plant four rows of Lettuce

1. Lettuce be faithful
2. Lettuce be Kind



3. Lettuce Really love each other  
No Garden is complete without

Turnips

1. Turnip for meetings
2. Turnip for service
3. Turnip to help one another

To conclude our garden we must  
have Thyme

1. Thyme for each other
2. Thyme for family
3. Thyme for friends

Water freely with patience and cultivate with love. There is much fruit in your garden because you reap what you sow. Pass it on!!!

The **SEVEN** Lasting Sayings of

*Christ on the Cross*

Thank you to the Ministers of Mt. Zion for a Tremendous  
“*Good Friday Service*”

It was truly a blessing shared  
by everyone in attendance!

The Audio Ministry has tapes available.



*Pulpit Conductor*  
ELDER THOMAS WHITE



*Father Forgive Them*  
MINISTER BOBBY SALES



*Today You Will Be With Me*  
MINISTER MONTRICE BETHEA



*Woman, Behold Your Son*  
ELDER WILLIAM MALONE



*Why Have You Forsaken Me*  
MINISTER ROBERT NEELY



*I Thirst*  
ELDER WILLIAM TYES



*It is Finished*  
ELDER BARNEY JOHNSON



*Father, Into Your Hands*  
MINISTER DAMIEN TURNER



## Editor's Page...

Sister Nikita Lehman

### Jesus ask this question: Who Do You Think That I Am? Consider what the Bible says about Him:

#### JESUS IS GOD

Jesus said, "I and the Father are one" ([John 10:30](#)). That means He claimed to be nothing less than God in human flesh.

#### JESUS IS HOLY

God is absolutely and perfectly holy ([Isaiah 6:3](#)), therefore He cannot commit or approve of evil ([James 1:13](#)). As God, Jesus embodied every element of God's character. [Colossians 2:9](#) says, "In Him all the fulness of Deity dwells in bodily form." He was perfectly holy ([Hebrews 4:15](#)). Even His enemies couldn't prove any accusation against Him ([John 8:46](#)) God requires holiness of us as well. [First Peter 1:16](#) says, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."

#### JESUS IS THE SAVIOR

Our failure to obey God—to be holy—places us in danger of eternal punishment ([2 Thessalonians 1:9](#)). The truth is, we cannot obey Him because we have neither the desire nor the ability to do so. We are by nature rebellious toward God ([Ephesians 2:1-3](#)). The Bible calls our rebellion "sin." According to Scripture, everyone is guilty of sin: "There is no man who does not sin" ([1 Kings 8:46](#)). "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" ([Romans 3:23](#)). And we are incapable of changing our sinful condition. [Jeremiah 13:23](#) says, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots? Neither can you do good who are accustomed to doing evil." Jesus is the only one who can forgive and transform us, thereby delivering us from the power and penalty of sin: "There is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved" ([Acts 4:12](#)). His love has provided a Savior, who paid the penalty and died for sinners: "Christ ... died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God" ([1 Peter 3:18](#)). Christ's death satisfied the demands of God's justice, thereby enabling Him to forgive and save those who place their faith in Him ([Romans 3:26](#)). [John 3:16](#) says, "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." He alone is "our great God and Savior" ([Titus 2:13](#)).

*From the  
"Spirit" Staff*



#### JESUS IS THE ONLY

#### ACCEPTABLE OBJECT OF SAVING FAITH

Many people assume there are many paths to God and that each religion represents an aspect of truth. But Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me" ([John 14:6](#)). He didn't claim to be one of many equally legitimate paths to God, or the way to God for His day only. He claimed to be the only way to God—then and forever.

#### JESUS IS LORD

[Romans 10:9](#) says, "If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved." Confessing Jesus as Lord means humbly submitting to His authority ([Philippians 2:10-11](#)). Believing that God has raised Him from the dead involves trusting in the historical fact of His resurrection—the pinnacle of Christian faith and the way the Father affirmed the deity and authority of the Son ([Romans 1:4](#); [Acts 17:30-31](#)). It isn't enough to believe certain facts about Christ. Even Satan and his demons believe in the true God ([James 2:19](#)), but they don't love and obey Him. Their faith is not genuine. True saving faith always responds in obedience ([Ephesians 2:10](#)).

#### JESUS IS THE JUDGE

All who reject Jesus as their Lord and Savior will one day face Him as their Judge: "God is now declaring to men that all everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead" ([Acts 17:30-31](#)).

#### HOW WILL YOU RESPOND?

Who does the Bible say Jesus is? The living God, the Holy One, the Savior, the only valid object of saving faith, the sovereign Lord, and the righteous Judge.

Who do you say Jesus is? That is the inescapable question. He alone can redeem you—free you from the power and penalty of sin. He alone can transform you, restore you to fellowship with God, and give your life eternal purpose. The question still remains, "How will you respond?"

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