

Just Between Us April 2010

In just a few days, we will celebrate Easter, a holiday that commemorates the most significant day in human history. In three of the Gospels, Jesus asks his disciples “who do you say that I am?” How we each answer that question determines how we celebrate Easter.

For many people, Easter is more about celebrating the hope of Spring time, hence the bunnies, and colored eggs and such. Spring always brings new life—animals give birth, plants that appeared dead now turn green and begin to bloom.

But while we all long to know that the weather will warm up, the grass will turn green and the snow will go away (at least by June), Easter offers much more hope than that. It gives us hope that:

- People who acknowledge their sinful nature are offered forgiveness.
- God’s Spirit dwells in those who follow Christ, so we are never alone.
- People we love who die in Christ will live again, more real in fact, than what we know in this life.

None of this hope is possible unless our hopes are built on a resurrected Lord. If Jesus did not in fact live again after his body was brutally executed, then we are gullible fools living wasted lives.

But if God has demonstrated his power to breathe life into a dead body, then everything else he promises is true. Death no longer intimidates us, for we will live again with a new body. Life has a new purpose, joining with the Trinity in expanding the Kingdom of God. So it’s worth asking the question once again this year, “Who is Jesus to me? Really?”

C. S. Lewis wrote, “I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: ‘I’m ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don’t accept His claim to be God.’ That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic -- on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg -- or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God: or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to. – *Mere Christianity*, pages 40-41.

I hope that by the time we get to Easter, all of us will be able to answer the question “Who is Jesus to me?” by confessing that Jesus is the crucified, resurrected Son of God who makes all hope possible. That’s a much bigger reason to celebrate than candy and hard-boiled eggs!