

“Back from the Dead”

Revelation 1:12-13a, 17-18

Pastor Art Hunt

Easter Weekend - April 15-16, 2017

Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw . . .¹³in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man . . .¹⁷When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, “Fear not, I am the first and the last,¹⁸ and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.

Revelation 1:12-13a, 17-18 (English Standard Version)

- Jesus’ First Claim: **“I’M ALIVE.”**

[Jesus says] *“Fear not, I am the first and the last,¹⁸ and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore . . .”* Revelation 1:17b-18a (ESV)

The Credible Evidence for Christ’s Resurrection

- First, the resurrection story is unparalleled in literature and religion.
- Two: We know that Jews Christians would not worship a man unless they believed He was God.
- Three: The historical accounts of the resurrection tell us that women were the first witnesses to Jesus’ empty tomb.
- Four: The historical facts say, “The tomb was empty.”
- Five: Jesus’ body was never produced.
- Six: The resurrected Jesus appeared to more than five hundred witnesses.
- Seven: It is not credible to think that the early Jewish Christians would have gone to their own deaths for a claim they knew to be a lie.

- Jesus’ Second Claim: **“I AM GOD.”**

“Fear not, I am the first and the last,¹⁸ and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore . . .” Revelation 1:17b-18a (ESV)

Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: "I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god." Isaiah 44:6 (ESV)

"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."
(from "Mere Christianity" by C.S. Lewis)

- Jesus' Third Claim: "**YOU'RE SAFE.**"

"Fear not . . . I have the keys of Death and Hades." Revelation 1:18b (ESV)

Application for Christians: In the midst of your fears, allow Jesus to lay His hand on you. Hear His words, "Fear not." Life, death and everything in between are in His hands. Be reminded: Things are not as they seem. The resurrected Jesus is the great unseen Reality.

Application for who have not yet entered the Kingdom of Heaven: Make your choice to see the credible evidence and believe Jesus is God and that He has risen from the dead. Then trust His work on the cross and enter His Kingdom through repentance and faith. As Lewis wrote: "Fall at his feet and call Him Lord and God."