
Who Is This Man?

Victory Life Church, Easter 2019

Saturday-Sunday, April 20-21, 2019

“Regardless of what anyone may personally think or believe about him, Jesus of Nazareth has been the dominant figure in the history of Western Culture for almost twenty centuries. If it were possible, with some sort of super magnet, to pull up out of the history every scrap of metal bearing at least a trace of his name, how much would be left?”¹ ~ Jaroslav Pelikan

By any standard, Jesus would be the least likely to have launched a global movement that would last 2,000 years. He was not a political figure, held no office, had no major connections to people with power. He led no military action. There were at least 10 other Messianic movements in Palestine in those days that the Roman Empire quenched, many of them their leader was crucified, and their leaders names were quickly forgotten. Jesus never traveled outside of his country and never wrote a book. His followers were relatively uneducated and ordinary. And now it’s nearly impossible to imagine world history and not think of this man.

Luke 24:1-6 (NLT) But very early on Sunday morning the women went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. They found that the stone had been rolled away from the entrance. So they went in, but they didn’t find the body of the Lord Jesus. As they stood there puzzled, two men suddenly appeared to them, clothed in dazzling robes. The women were terrified and bowed with their faces to the ground. Then the men asked, “Why are you looking among the dead for **someone who is alive**? He isn’t here! **HE IS RISEN** from the dead!”

The Jesus movement was launched with this small group of His followers claiming that Jesus had **risen from the dead**, but not as a ghost or a spirit, but a full, bodily resurrected man. They claimed that he did not simply cheat death, but that **he beat it**. He let death take him and defeated death in death’s domain.

This resurrection story is the climax of a theme in Luke’s Gospel. This Gospel is one of the earliest accounts of Jesus’ life and is told with a theme of Jesus disrupting a perceived order in society, reversing the human condition in a supernatural and transforming way.

Jesus reveals the **superior power** and **love of God** to transform and heal broken lives.

The Gospel of Luke is full of “Stories of Reversals”, here are just a few in three categories: the “unholy,” the “unclean,” and the “rebel.” These stories are for us to see who this man Jesus really is, and what that means for us today.

¹ Jaroslav Pelikan, *Jesus Through the Centuries: His place in the History of Culture*, pg. 1

1. The “Unholy”

- The Tax-collector, Zacchaeus: Luke 19:1-10
- The Sinful Woman: Luke 7:36-50

Luke 19:9-10 (NLT) Jesus responded, “Salvation has come to this home today, for this man has shown himself to be a **true son** of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to **seek and save** those who are lost.”

Luke 7:47-50 (NLT) “I tell you, her sins—and they are many—have been forgiven, so she has shown me much love. But a person who is forgiven little shows only little love.” Then Jesus said to the woman, “**Your sins are forgiven.**” The men at the table said among themselves, “**Who is this man**, that he goes around forgiving sins?” And Jesus said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”

Jesus associates himself, voluntarily, with the sinners: but instead of that making him a sinner too, it means that **sinners are rescued**.

Jesus is the one who extends forgiveness and new life to the “unholy”.

2. The “Unclean”

- The Leper: Luke 5:12-13
- The Woman with the Issue of Blood: Luke 8:42-48

Luke 5:12-13 (NLT) In one of the villages, Jesus met a man with **an advanced case** of leprosy. When the man saw Jesus, he bowed with his face to the ground, begging to be healed. “Lord,” he said, “**if you are willing**, you can **heal me** and **make me clean.**” Jesus **reached out and touched him.** “I am willing,” he said. “Be healed!” And instantly the leprosy disappeared.

Luke 8:43-48 (NLT) A woman in the crowd had suffered for twelve years with constant bleeding, and she could find no cure. Coming up behind Jesus, she touched the fringe of his robe. Immediately, the bleeding stopped. “**Who touched me?**” Jesus asked. Everyone denied it, and Peter said, “Master, this whole crowd is pressing up against you.” But Jesus said, “Someone deliberately touched me, for I felt **healing power go out from me.**” When the woman realized that she could not stay hidden, she began to tremble and fell to her knees in front of him. The whole crowd heard her explain why she had touched him and that she had been immediately healed. “Daughter,” he said to her, “your faith has **made you well.** Go in peace.”

Jesus doesn’t seem to contract uncleanness. It just doesn’t stick to him. Instead, power flows in the opposite direction.

Jesus is the one who gives healing and wholeness to the “unclean” sick and rejected.

3. The “Rebel”

- The Criminal on the Cross: Luke 23:39-43

Luke 23:39-43 (NLT) One of the **criminals** hanging beside him scoffed, “So you’re the Messiah, are you? Prove it by saving yourself—and us, too, while you’re at it!” But the other **criminal** protested, “Don’t you fear God even when you have been sentenced to die? We deserve to die for our crimes, but **this man hasn’t done anything wrong.**” Then he said, “Jesus, **remember me** when you come into your Kingdom.” And Jesus replied, “I assure you, today **you will be with me** in paradise.”

Jesus is numbered with the transgressors, so that transgressors may be with him in Paradise.

Jesus is the one who gives new life to the guilty “rebels”.

Who is this man?

Jesus identifies with us so that we can identify with him. It is because of the resurrection that makes a reversal possible for you and me today.

Jesus is the risen King, and He transforms lives still today.