

Reprinted from the Christian Science Monitor, March 29, 2002.
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Resurrection

By Elise L. Moore, C.S.B.

Almost 2,000 years ago, Jesus Christ resurrected from death and the grave. This remarkable event is celebrated by millions as the Christian festival Easter. For those unfamiliar with Jesus' history, it's told and retold in the Bible's four Gospels - Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

The short version is that Jesus preached, taught, and healed for three years. His words and works challenged religious traditions of his time.

The rulers decided to stop his spiritually subversive influence by killing him. Jesus was tortured to death in a public spectacle. Sympathetic friends buried his body in a cave. On the third day, Jesus revived and appeared in the flesh to his followers.

This event changed the thinking of the world. That someone could be killed and buried and yet live in the flesh three days later could occur only through divine power. And this is the main message of Jesus' life, that with God all things are possible (see Matt. 19:26).

Jesus preached God's power and presence. He inspired people to change their behavior and live moral, upright lives. He healed others of birth defects, paralysis, mental illness, and death. He gave the perfect example of righteous living and selfless service. Jesus was the Son of God, the promised Messiah, or Christ.

Christ is the divine healing power of God, reaching humanity. Jesus was the embodiment of this divine power, or, as the Bible puts it, "The Word [Christ] was made flesh [Jesus]" (John 1:14). God raised Jesus from the dead, proving that torture, ignorance, envy, and even death couldn't destroy the Christ.

The message of the resurrection is not only that Jesus was saved from death, but that the power of God can raise *us* from sin, sickness, and death. Jesus taught his students, "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father" (John 14:12).

The resurrection empowered those who witnessed it and those who believed their witness. They turned from mundane living to seek the spiritual and put into practice its possibilities on earth. And they were able to heal, as Jesus had foretold.

Remarkable healings are recorded for 300 years after Jesus' resurrection. The Bible mentions a few in the book of Acts. But the impact of the resurrection was far greater than a few men over a few years. Augustine wrote in his book "The City of God": "... I realized how many miracles were occurring in our own day and which were so like the miracles of old and also how wrong it would be to allow the memory of these marvels of divine power to perish from among our people.

"It is only two years ago that the keeping of records was begun here in Hippo, and already, at this writing, we have nearly seventy attested miracles.... And, of course, at Calama, where the recording began much earlier and where miracles are more frequent, the number of attested cases is incomparably greater."

The healing of sickness and sin, even death, occurs today. When my father was six years old, my grandmother was healed of a heart condition that was supposed to have killed her within six months. She lived into her advanced 80s. Thousands of such healings have been verified and published in the weekly Christian Science Sentinel and the monthly magazine The Christian Science Journal. More healings are recorded in the last chapter of "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" by Monitor founder Mary Baker Eddy.

The message of the resurrection is that Christ is alive to heal and save today. The Christ-power is as active now as it was 2,000 years ago. Those who believe in the resurrection have hope that God can and will raise us from sin and sickness. And we can have more than hope. Jesus' resurrection proved that the law of God reigns supreme on earth. As Mrs. Eddy states in the tenets of Christian Science, "We acknowledge that the crucifixion of Jesus

and his resurrection served to uplift faith to understand eternal Life, even the allness of Soul, Spirit, and the nothingness of matter" (pg. 497).

Jesus was crucified because of the sin and hatred of the world. He rose again and lived for us to show us the way of eternal life.