



## Jesus is Alive . . . So Now What?

Jesus is alive! He has risen. He has risen indeed... So what am I supposed to do now? Although they shared grief and sorrow (and fear) when Jesus was in the tomb, at least the disciples had a sense of closure. There is great sadness when a loved one dies, and yet when they breathe their last, sometimes you feel like you are exhaling for the first time. There is an odd grace in goodbye.

But Jesus is alive! This is certainly good news, but now our relationship with God is lovingly a bit more complicated. Paul writes in Romans 12 that Christians are to be a “Living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God.” A sacrifice is usually something finite and concrete, something you might offer for one particular need. The Jewish People would sacrifice an animal at the Temple as a means of thanksgiving or pardon or in celebration (or continuation) of blessings. Today we might make a special monetary gift or volunteer our time or take on a leadership role in the community or open our home to a friend in need. These sacrifices are a great thing, but they are all temporary.

The resurrection complicates our understanding of sacrifice. No longer is sacrifice a one time offering toward a special cause or a temporary agreement to serve with a foundation. The tomb is about closure, but Jesus is alive. We are to be a living sacrifice, which means that we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving to always be in service to God’s kingdom. In other words, a sacrifice is no longer something we do, it is who we are. We no longer volunteer at church. We are the church. We no longer serve the body of Christ. We are the body of Christ. As difficult as it may be to die for what you believe, it is more difficult (and more blessed) to live for what you believe. You only die once. You have to live everyday. Jesus is alive, and through grace, so are we.

Pastor Bert

