

Easter Every Day

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The Museum of Failure [opened](#) two weeks ago in New York City. It includes 159 different products and services that show the risks inherent in innovation. Examples [include](#):

- The DeLorean car: only nine thousand were produced before the company went bankrupt in 1982.
- Coke II (they returned to the original after only seventy-nine days)
- Colgate frozen dinners
- Coors water
- Colored ketchup
- Bottled pet water
- Yogurt shampoo
- Harley Davidson perfume

What from your past deserves to be included in your personal Museum of Failure?

Here's the good news: because of Easter, all that Jesus has ever done, he is still doing.

Our secular culture thinks of Easter as bunnies and springtime traditions. It views Jesus in the same way it views Confucius, Muhammad, or other long-dead religious leaders. But our secular culture is wrong: Easter is far more than an annual holiday or religious tradition. On Easter, the crucified Christ actually, physically rose from the dead.

As a result, all he did when he was alive on this planet, he is still doing because he is alive and still working on our planet. Right now, this moment, Jesus “is at the right hand of God” where he is “interceding for us” (Romans 8:34). But also, by the power of his Holy Spirit at work in the world and in our lives, he is working today just as he did two thousand years ago.

Why do you need his leadership, forgiveness, or healing today? Where do you need the risen Christ to be alive in your life? If we will trust him, we can have Easter every day.

Let's look at a dramatic example, then we'll see how this story can be our story today.

Meeting Christ on Patmos

Revelation 1 finds the Apostle John imprisoned on the island of Patmos, the Alcatraz of the ancient world. The Roman emperor Domitian had exiled John here in AD 95 to separate him from his ministry in Ephesus and across Asia Minor.

But while John could no longer go to church, Christ could come to John.

Ancient tradition identifies the site as a cave halfway up the side of a mountain. A church that traces its origins to John's ministry still meets there today. I have been there several times and always find the experience awe-inspiring.

Here, John reports, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day" (v. 10a). "In the Spirit" refers to worshiping in intimacy with the Lord. This is the first reference to "the Lord's day" in Scripture or other literature. We know that early Christians worshiped Christ on Sunday (John 20:19; Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2).

Suddenly, John says, "I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet" (Revelation 1:10b). He was kneeling in the back of his cave, which was open to the Aegean Sea hundreds of feet below. Then he heard the loudest sound a human could make, something like a foghorn or megaphone for us.

The voice instructed him: "Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches" (v. 11). The risen Christ revealed himself to John in his stupendous, awe-inspiring heavenly glory (vv. 12–16). Then John reports, "When 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, and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades. Write therefore the things that you have seen, those that are and those that are to take place after this'" (vv. 17–19).

The result was what we call the Book of Revelation. It is one example of our claim today: because of Easter, all that Jesus has ever done, he is still doing. We can have Easter every day.

Let's be specific.

One: The risen Christ changes lives.

Acts 9 recounts the conversion of Saul of Tarsus as he made his way to persecute Christians in Damascus. On the road he met the risen Christ, who blinded him with "light from heaven" (v. 3) and said to him, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting" (v. 5). The result was the greatest evangelist, missionary, and theologian in Christian history.

The risen Christ is still changing lives today. In a recent *New York Times* article, Anglican priest and columnist Tish Harrison Warren [reports](#) that Christianity in sub-Saharan Africa has grown from 9 percent at the beginning of the twentieth century to almost 45 percent at the end of it. By some estimates, China will have more Christians than any other nation by 2030. Warren cites what she calls "conservative" estimates that there were around 98 million evangelical Christians globally in 1970; now there are over 342 million.

Where do you need Jesus to change your life?

What sins do you need him to forgive?

What problems do you need him to help?

Have you asked him to forgive your sin and become your Savior and Lord?

Have you received eternal life through his love and grace?

Because of Easter, the risen Christ still changes lives today. All he has ever done, he is still doing. If we will trust him, we can have Easter every day.

Two: The risen Christ speaks to his people.

We see this fact exhibited here on Patmos. We see it in John 21 where the risen Christ cooks fish for his disciples and restores Peter to his leadership role in the apostolic movement. We see it in Acts 1 when he spends forty days with his disciples before returning to heaven (Acts 1:3).

Jesus promised that after he returned to heaven, the Holy Spirit would come to live in us and that he would “guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come” (John 16:13).

Where do you need divine wisdom and omniscient guidance?

Do you need leadership from One who knows the past, the present, and the future?

Because of Easter, the risen Christ guides his people today. All he has ever done, he is still doing. If we will trust him, we can have Easter every day.

Three: The risen Christ heals bodies

In Acts 3, Peter and John meet a man who was lame from birth and say to him, “In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!” (v. 6). With this result: “And he took him by the right hand and raised him up, and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong. And leaping up, he stood and began to walk, and entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God” (vv. 7–8).

Jesus is still healing bodies today. In his marvelous book, [*Miracles Today*](#), New Testament scholar Craig Keener devotes an entire section to documenting healing miracles in history and in our day. He documents medical miracles by which blind eyes have been opened, cataracts have been removed, the lame have been enabled to walk, the deaf have been enabled to hear, and spinal injuries and even leprosy have been healed.

Here's one example: Pastor Duane Miller suffered for three years with a throat ailment caused by a virus that penetrated the myelin sheath of his vocal cords and damaged his nerve tissue beyond repair. He visited sixty-three specialists, but none could help him.

One Sunday he was teaching a Sunday school class at First Baptist Church in Houston, Texas. His subject was Psalm 103:3, “[God] heals all your diseases.” Suddenly, as he was teaching, God healed his voice. Because his lesson was recorded, you can [hear](#) the miracle as it happens. Pastor Miller has shared the story in a book and all across the country.

Dr. Keener even has a section of his book devoted to those who have been raised from the dead. He documents such miracles in Africa, Asia, and the West.

Where do you need divine healing and help?

Because of Easter, the risen Christ heals people today. All he has ever done, he is still doing. If we will trust him, we can have Easter every day.

Our response

How should we respond to the risen Christ on this Sunday as we celebrate his resurrection?

First, worship him.

John “fell at his feet as though dead” (Revelation 1:17a). When last were you awed by God?

Second, trust in him.

Jesus “laid his right hand” on John and told him, “Fear not, I am the first and the last, and the living one. I died, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades” (vv. 17b–18). He would lay his hand on you today, dispel your fears, and encourage your faith.

What fears do you need to trust to him?

Third, obey him.

Jesus told John, “Write therefore the things that you have seen, those that are and those that are to take place after this” (v. 19). John’s obedience led to the Book of Revelation and changed the world.

What is your next step of obedience to the risen Christ?

Conclusion

Let’s close with one more example of our theme. [Dr. Chauncey Crandall](#) is a world-renowned cardiologist practicing in Palm Beach, Florida. He is also a professor of medicine at Mount Sinai Heart New York. He studied at Yale and taught at Duke before moving into private practice. He has lectured nationally and internationally on heart transplantation, interventional cardiology, and preventive cardiology.

In Dr. Keener’s book on miracles, he tells the story of Jeff Markin, a man who died in a Florida emergency room. Physicians worked for almost forty minutes to revive him. They shocked him seven times. Dr. Crandall confirmed that Markin was beyond resuscitation, and he was declared dead shortly before 8 a.m.

Crandall wrote his assessment and started to return to his rounds when, he reports, he felt an unusual prompting from the Holy Spirit to return to the body. The nurse was preparing it for the morgue. His eyes were fixed and dilated; his face and extremities had turned black with cyanosis.

Nonetheless, Dr. Crandall obeyed the prompting, praying aloud for God to resuscitate Markin and thus give him a second chance to know the Lord. Then he urged his colleague to shock Markin one more time. When he did, the flat line on the monitor jumped to a normal heartbeat. With no help, he started breathing immediately. Although even six minutes without air leaves the brain irreparably damaged, Markin had no problems with his brain or other organs. Journalists interviewed witnesses and checked records, verifying the story.

After being raised from the dead, Markin visited regularly with Dr. Crandall and did come to know the Lord. Dr. Crandall sent Dr. Keener a photo of them together at Markin's baptism as a Christian.

Because of Easter, all that Jesus has ever done, he is still doing. If we will trust him, we can have Easter every day.

Why do you need the miracle of Easter today?

This sermon was provided by Jim Denison of Denison Forum. For more pastoral resources, subscribe to A Pastor's View, our twice-weekly email newsletter just for pastors and church leaders at denisonforum.org/church-leadership.