

Jesus Changes Everything Core Convictions 11.10.19

We are three weeks into a 6-week series, where we are exploring what we (and our denomination, the EFCA) believe to be the most central and essential theological beliefs, why we believe that, and how it should shape our lives. Today, we will take about the most significant and singularly important theological belief of anyone we will talk about. Today, we are going to examine who Jesus is, and why without correct belief and conviction about who he is and what he can do for us, no other belief will matter. You can believe that God is good, the Bible is important, that man is broken, and we could go on, but if you reject Jesus, you will not be given a new life. And ultimately, that means death... spiritual death. I know that sounds heavy. It is. But, on the other side of that coin is a life so full and free that nothing in this world will compare to it. We are convinced of that! Simply, we are convinced that Jesus can change your life.

Let's level – Jesus Can Change Your Life

- a. “We believe that Jesus Christ, as our representative and substitute, shed His blood on the cross as the perfect, all-sufficient sacrifice for our sins. His atoning death and **victorious resurrection** constitute the only ground for salvation.” (EFCA statement #5)
 - i. **We believe that Jesus can change your life. Not just give you a pass to some ethereal – baby angels with harps – floating on clouds – afterlife.**
 1. We believe that he has the power to change you and me from the inside out, change our world, redeem our relationships, and will have a final once-and-for-all victory over all wrongs that have ever occurred.

Today we are going to look at a story of two disciples who had placed all of their hope in a Rabi named Jesus of Nazareth. Yet, we find them walking in despair and confusion at the events that had just taken place. Days earlier, they were watching the crowds flock to Jesus and declare that he was the new King David... the one who was going to overthrow the Romans. Honestly, that feels like a lifetime from today. Today, they are still sorting the events of the last 72-hours. The arrest, trial, and execution of Jesus. How could it have gone so wrong so quickly? Why did he have to be treated the way he was? As if he had committed treason and started a rebellion. They knew what the cross meant, and who it was reserved for.

We are going to pick up their story in Luke 24:13-35.

Sometimes the savior we're looking for is no savior at all. (v. 21)

The two disciples in our story today had high hopes for Jesus. They believed that he was a prophet sent by God and the one who was going to liberate Israel from the Romans. The problem is, the savior they were looking for wasn't the savior they needed. And, most

importantly, it wasn't the savior God promised or sent in Jesus. So, what went wrong? And how are we just like them?

a. "Israel's promised Messiah"

i. V.15 – Jesus draws near to the disciples."

1. They are confused, disoriented, and grieving what has just taken place in Jerusalem.

a. Jesus has been crucified. **Their hopes have literally died.**

b. They are prevented from **seeing** Jesus by several roadblocks. (v.19)

ii. **They were prevented by:**

1. **Reality:** The Romans were really good at capital punishment!

a. In a gesture that was to antagonize the chief priests, **Pilate had a notice prepared and fastened to the cross. It read: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.** Pilate felt forced, under the implied threat from the chief priests of reporting him to Caesar, to condemn a man he believed was innocent of any capital offence.¹

b. No one comes down from the cross on their own. And, no one got back up after they were taken down!

i. The cross was reserved for some of the worst criminals in the empire. The Romans intended to make a statement with it!

2. **Expectations:** They were expecting a conquering king as their Messiah.

a. They believed that they were exiles (their people had been exiled for over 500 years to this point), and that the Romans were occupiers of the land that God had given their forefathers as the promised land.

b. **This suggests the high degree of perception on the part of the NT community that David's life served as a type of the future Messiah. The true Messiah would be one whose experience paralleled King David's.**

c. **Verse 21 - "A prophet"**

i. **And they said to him, "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people,²⁰ and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him.²¹ But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel.²**

¹ Kruse, C. G. (2003). [*John: an introduction and commentary*](#) (Vol. 4, p. 360). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

² [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Lk 24:19–21). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

- iii. They were “prevented’ from recognizing him.
 - 1. What prevents you and me from seeing Jesus for who he is?
- b. **What prevents you and me from seeing Jesus correctly? → We’re not all that different from them!**
 - i. **Reality:**
 - 1. Their reality was the cross and the Roman empire.
 - 2. Our reality is:
 - a. Affluence and Security: If I don’t earn it, no one else will take care of me.
 - b. Morals and Culture: If our culture would “just get it right”, then we’d be fine.
 - c. Academics and Degrees: My advancement and stability are directly tied to my performance.
 - d. Athletics and Performance: What if I never live up to my potential?
 - ii. **Expectations:**
 - 1. They expected a conquering king to overcome their oppressor.
 - 2. Our expectations are:
 - a. Politics and Policies: Who we elect and the policies they make will save us.
 - b. Health and Benefits: My physical health and wellbeing are the utmost priority.
 - c. Success and Successors: My ability to earn an income and stave off financial ruin will keep me.
 - iii. **Failed ambassadors of Jesus’ image:**
 - 1. There are far too many people that have tarnished the name and character of Jesus.
 - a. They have been close to us.
 - b. They might have been family.
 - c. They might have been famous or influential.
 - 2. **Whatever they did, God does not support, endorse, or dismiss.**
 - a. This damage and trauma can make it feel impossible to see Jesus for who he is, our loving and merciful savior.
 - b. He will have victory over all the wrongs that have ever been committed. (Rev.21)
- c. **God’s timing:** God in his providence for them orchestrated a conversation that met them exactly where they were at.
 - i. “Drew near” - ἐγγίζω (*engizo*)
 - 1. The verb *drew near* might refer to an approach from any direction, but as the two speak of Jesus as being from Jerusalem (18), the meaning must be that **he overtook them as they journeyed**. On a number of occasions the risen Jesus was not recognized at first (Matt. 28:17; John 20:14; 21:4); so now.³

³ Morris, L. (1988). [*Luke: an introduction and commentary*](#) (Vol. 3, p. 356). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

- ii. The risen Jesus is intentional in “drawing near” to these two disciples. And, he was intentional in what he shared with them.
 1. ³² They said to each other, “Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?”⁴
 2. Jesus doesn’t meet them where he thinks they should be; he meets them exactly where they are at.
 - a. How is Jesus drawing near to you?
 - i. **Other’s examples:** He drew near to me through the lives of others. I needed to see that he really could change lives.

d. Walkthrough the OT: Jesus in the OT

- i. **Thirty-three or so are actually quoted or cited or both by a Gospel author.**⁵

²⁷ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. ⁶

⁴⁴ Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” ⁷

- ii. **Gen. 3:14-15**
- iii. **Isa.53:12** Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.
 1. **Luke 22:37**
 - a. For I tell you that this Scripture must be fulfilled in me: ‘And he was numbered with the transgressors.’ For what is written about me has its fulfillment.”
 - b. Context: Jesus connects this to himself just prior to his arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane.
- iv. **Psalm 8:2** Out of the mouth of babies and infants, you have established strength because of your foes, to still the enemy and the avenger.
 1. Context → Matt. 21:16
 - a. and they said to him, “Do you hear what these are saying?” And Jesus said to them, “Yes; have you never read, “ ‘Out of the mouth of infants and nursing babies you have prepared praise?’”

⁴ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Lk 24:32). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

⁵ Marlowe, C. (2007). [Messianic Prophecies Fulfilled in the Gospels](#). In *Holman Christian Standard Bible: Harmony of the Gospels* (p. 341). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.

⁶ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Lk 24:27). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

⁷ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Lk 24:44). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

- b. Children were praising Jesus as the “Son of David”. This means they were praising him as the savior / messiah.
- c. The religious leaders heard this and were indignant.

Jesus wants all of your life or none of it.

- e. V.34 → If Jesus really is the one who can conquer death, then he is the one who can change our lives.
 - i. He is not the one who can only tinker with certain parts of my life.
 - 1. **Now we see why it was so essential that Peter should grasp the conditions of Messiahship for Jesus: otherwise, Peter could not grasp the conditions of discipleship for himself.**⁸
 - ii. Mark 8:34-38
 - 1. **If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. ³⁵ For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel’s will save it.**⁹
 - iii. In this passage, Jesus gets to a point where he defines exactly who he is and what we **must decide** about him.
 - 1. **Prophet / Myth / Messiah**
 - iv. If Jesus is savior, what reality does he define for us?
 - 1. **They must... This is not a suggestion by Jesus, but a command.**
 - 2. Denial of self – All of my life is available for God to examine and redeem.
 - 3. Lose your life in order for it to be saved.
 - a. **Repent of sin.**
 - b. **You must give up power and control of your life... Ie. You must surrender all of your life, dreams, hopes, and desires to Jesus.**
 - i. He will begin replacing them with eternal life, his hope, dreams, and desires.
 - c. **What if I’m unsure if I want God’s hopes, dreams, and desires?**
 - i. Great question! How is life going for you so far?
 - ii. Mankind has been trying to save himself for ages and ages... how well has it worked so far?!?
 - iii. **God will not give you hopes, dreams, and desires that will disappoint you.**

⁸ Cole, R. A. (1989). [*Mark: An Introduction and Commentary*](#) (Vol. 2, p. 210). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

⁹ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Mk 8:34–38). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

4. **Jesus is not interested in our intellectual agreement with the idea of who he is; he is exclusively interested in conviction that transforms us. → I.e. He will have all of our life or none of it.**
 - a. Conviction that transforms not just belief that agrees.
- f. **My cooperation with his Spirit is essential for my growth and sanctification.**
 - i. Sanctification: The process of becoming more and more like Jesus in my attitudes, actions, and priorities.
 1. **Acts 1:8 - But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.**¹⁰
 2. **John 14:15-17, 26 - ¹⁵“If you love me, you will keep my commandments. ¹⁶And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, ¹⁷even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. ¹¹ ... ²⁶But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.**¹²
 - ii. We are not called to be perfect, to live perfectly, or to pretend that we could be perfect. We are called to live a life that is cooperating with the Spirit of God (Gal. 5:25) as we walk in the footsteps of Jesus (1 Jn. 2:6).
 1. **Simply, a follower of Jesus is supposed to increasingly model the character and priorities of Jesus every new day.**

Jesus didn't just want belief that agreed with the idea that he was a good teacher, a mighty prophet of God, or a king that could overthrow their enemies. **He wanted their hearts to burn with a conviction that he was the long-promised Messiah, the only one who could restore us and this world.** He wanted to change their lives, and that required them to see him for who he truly was, **the one who could defeat death itself.** That day, on the road to Emmaus, they saw him, and they believed.

From: Core Convictions – Jesus Changes Everything.
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¹⁰ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Ac 1:8). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

¹¹ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Jn 14:15–17). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

¹² [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Jn 14:26). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.