



# THE RESURRECTION RELAY

JOHN 20:1-18

On the mornings following the death of Jesus, it must have seemed like a bad dream to those who loved Him the most. But soon Mary was running the **Resurrection Relay** and made the first Easter proclamation to the disciples, ***“I have seen the Lord!”***—vv. 1-18. God commissions us like Mary and the other disciples, to “run” with and pass on to others the good news! But what is the “good news” message of Easter? The empty tomb is not enough, even for the devout and the good. There must be more to the message, or many will not believe or understand.

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A CHRISTIAN - A CHRIST FOLLOWER? To answer that:

### HERE ARE THE BASIC QUESTIONS:

#### I. “WHAT IS THE MEANING OF MY LIFE?”

#### II. “WHY ARE WE HERE”? TWO REASONS:

##### A. GOD MADE US TO LOVE US!

- **Jer. 31:3**—*The LORD appeared to us in the past saying: “I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with lovingkindness.”*
- **Eph. 1:4b-5**—*“...In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ...”*

##### B. WE WERE CREATED TO ENJOY A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD AND TO MANAGE ALL THE REST OF HIS CREATION!

- **1 Tim. 6:17**—*“Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.”*
- **John 10:10**—*“...I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”* (We’re not really living, until we know Him.)

---

## C. WHEN WE KNOW AND LOVE GOD IT PRODUCES TREMENDOUS BENEFITS.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A clear conscience—Rom. 8:1</li><li>• A purpose in life—Rom. 8:28</li><li>• Power and strength—Phil. 4:13</li><li>• Help in weaknesses—Rom. 8:26</li><li>• Security—Romans 8:39</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fulfillment—Phil. 4:19</li><li>• Life/peace—Rom. 8:6</li><li>• Confidence—Rom. 8:31</li><li>• Freedom—John 8:32,36</li><li>• A fresh start—2 Cor. 5:17</li></ul> |
|---|--|

1. This is the kind of life-style God intends for us to live.
2. Why aren't most people experiencing the benefits God offers?

## III. WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

- A. **All people have a natural *desire* to be boss and to ignore God's principles for living.** We want to be our own boss, our own coach.
- B. **The Bible calls this attitude *sin*.** (The center of sin is "I")
- **Isaiah 53:6**—*"We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way..."*
  - **1 John 1:8**—*"If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us."*
- C. **Sin breaks our close *relationship* with God.**  
**Isaiah 59:2**—*"But your iniquities (sins) have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear."*
- D. **Sin causes us to be *afraid* of God and to try to live our lives outside His will, or come to Him on our own terms.**  
**Proverbs 16:25**—*"There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death."* (See Is. 59:2; Rom. 3:23.)

### The Way That Seems Right

1. **"My mother was a Christian, so I must be a Christian."**  
(Salvation by heritage)
2. **"It doesn't matter what you believe, just be sincere."**  
(Salvation by sincerity)
3. **"I'll give up all my bad habits."** (Salvation by subtraction)
4. **"I'll work really hard and earn it."** (Salvation by service)
5. **"I'll be religious and go to church."** (Salvation by scale)

- 
- None of the ways work, so God had **PLAN B**, whereby we could get into heaven on the ticket of someone else who was perfect, **and His name is Jesus Christ**.
  - *“I will come to earth in the form of a human being and I will be called Jesus Christ. I will live a perfect life, and I will let people see what God is really like in human form. And then I will die on the cross to pay for their sins, so whoever trusts in Me can come in to heaven on **My ticket**.”*

#### **IV. WHAT'S THE SOLUTION AND THE GOOD NEWS WE**

**SHARE WITH OTHERS?** God Himself came to earth as a human being to bring us back to Himself. **John 14:6**—*“...I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”*

#### **A. JESUS HAS TAKEN CARE OF ALL OF OUR NEEDS.**

1. **Jesus has already taken care of our sin problem!**  
**Romans 6:23**—*“For the wages of sin is death (that’s the bad news), but (here’s the good news) the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

Other myths about what it means to be a Christian:

- a. *“I’m an American, therefore I’m a Christian.”*
  - b. *“I joined the church, so I’m a Christian.”*
  - c. *“I was born in the church.”*
  - d. *“I got baptized.”*
  - e. *“I believe in God.”*
2. **God took care of our sin problem because He loves us and wants us to know Him!**
    - **Rom. 5:8**—*“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”*
    - **1 Tim. 2:5**—*“For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.”*

- #### **B. GOD HAS ALREADY DONE HIS PART TO RESTORE OUR RELATIONSHIP TO HIM.** Since He took the initiative and came to earth, He waits for each of us to individually accept what He has done for us.
-

---

**V. WHAT DOES GOD WANT US TO DO?** Four things:

**A. ADMIT that God has not been first place in our life and ask Him to forgive our sins.** Notice what the Scriptures promise: **1 John 1:9**—*“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”*

**B. BELIEVE that Jesus died to pay for our sins, that He rose again on Easter, and is alive today.** Notice this verse: **Romans 10:9**—*“...if you **confess** with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and **believe** in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you **will** be saved.”* (**Confess & believe** and we’ll be saved.)

**C. ACCEPT God’s free gift of salvation. Don’t try to earn it!** **Eph. 2:8-9**—*“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.”* Our relationship to Christ is because of what Jesus Christ already did for us on the cross.

**D. INVITE Jesus Christ to come into our life and be the director (“Lord”) of our life.** Announce, **“Under New Management.”** **John 1:12-13**—*“Yet to all who **received** him, to those who **believed** in his name, he gave the right to become children of God - children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.”* (**How do we do that? Rev. 3:20**—Jesus says, *“I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in...”*)

**E. LIVE our lives continually in Jesus**—Col. 2:6-15

**Take These Steps by Praying a Simple Prayer:**

“Dear Jesus, thank You for making me and loving me, even when I’ve ignored You and gone my own way. I realize I need You in my life and I’m sorry for my sins. I ask You to forgive me. Thank You for dying on the cross for me. Please help me to understand it more. As much as I know how, I want to follow You from now on. Please come into my life and make me a new person inside. I accept Your gift of salvation and turn from my old way of living. Help me now to grow as I follow You with my whole heart. I want a “Fresh Start.” Amen.

**Easter Challenge:** Enter **The Resurrection Relay** and hand off to others the good news about Jesus and your salvation.

---