The Significance of Jesus’ Resurrection Claims

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**Foundational Scripture:**

**Intro**:

* In all four gospel accounts, Jesus repeatedly predicts that He is going to die and then rise from the dead on the third day. That statement in and of itself is not considered common practice among ordinary human beings. It is because of statements like those many people have considered if Jesus was a lunatic or some delusional liar looking for attention. But neither of those prove to be true after thorough investigation leaving us with the only other conclusion there is: **Jesus knew what He was talking about**. And if He did, then these claims are still very much extraordinary but not just extraordinary. They are indicative of a divine origin of which Jesus was an agent come to execute some drastic, supernatural mission.
* This is what all four gospels teach and what they claim to be the absolute truth. The entire gospel story is framed on the idea that Jesus was not merely a prophet, but the divine Son of God Himself who became flesh. He was God incarnate: **Immanuel!** And Jesus’ resurrection claims, to be specific, are of life-changing, faith altering significance because it demonstrates something far deeper and wider than just 4 the four gospel accounts. **What is the significance of Jesus’ Resurrection Claims?**

1. **A purposeful plan (Matt. 12:38-42; 16:21; 17:9, 22-23; 20:18-19; 26:32; Mk. 9:9-10; Lk. 9:22; Jn. 2:18-22)**
   1. Most of Jesus’ predictions about His future resurrection come on the heels of a confession or recognition that He is God. It is only with such understanding that Jesus explicitly claims, specifically to His disciples, that He will die and rise from the dead (Matt. 16:21; 17:9, 22-23).
   2. The reason Jesus does this is precisely because of the controversy and impossibility surrounding the idea of the resurrection. He wants them and all men to realize and recognize that what’s going to happen is solely because of the power of God. It transcends human power and might.
   3. But all of Jesus’ predictions indicate something far more significant than whether or not the resurrection is possible. All of Jesus’ claims reflect an understanding of a mission to be accomplished; a plan to be fulfilled.
   4. Jesus predicts His death and resurrection to point us to the reality that this was a purposeful plan set in order since the foundation of the world (Matt. 13:35; Eph. 1:3-4; 1 Pet. 1:20; Rev. 13:8). What occurs in the gospels is not representative of an anomaly of some sorts but rather the fulfillment of what has been unfolding since Genesis.
   5. Jesus’ predictions are done as a rhetorical way of drawing our attention to a God who has had our well-being, our lives, our sin and our salvation in mind since the beginning. When we look at Jesus’ resurrection claims, this is a man who speaks brilliantly and knowledgeably of what He knows and believes to be certain and true.
   6. Jesus always spoke with confidence and authority with respect to the truth and the scriptures and these claims are no different when considering His resurrection (cf. Matt. 7:28; Jn. 7:46). He displays wisdom and assurance when talking about His resurrection (Matt. 12:38-42).
   7. Another important aspect of Jesus’ predictions is that it leaves nothing to coincidence or luck. The fact that Jesus explicitly describes how and by whom He is going to killed, that He was going to be raised and what He was going to do after illustrates the fundamental point that His coming and passion was part of God’s purposeful plan (Matt. 20:18-19; 26:32).
   8. This aspect of Jesus’ predictions is important because of suggested theories concerning what happened after He died on the cross. He states these claims in order to dismiss any speculations and clouding doubt that would arise after the resurrection to explain what happened.
   9. These claims, these predictions serve as remarkable pieces of evidence to amplify the nature of God’s foreknowledge and wisdom but also His love, mercy and forgiveness. When Jesus made these declaration He had all of us in mind.
   10. There was no doubt that Jesus had to execute His mission and God’s plan in order for us to be here today. We have done nothing to merit God’s grace and forgiveness yet He cares for us so deeply that Jesus not only came to die and rise but He freely talked about it knowing what would happen but what it would result in. We would all do well to honor God and give Him the thanks He deserves for all that He has done for us.

**Sources:**

McDowell, J. *Evidence That Demands A Verdict*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1999.