

# Resurrection as Certainty and Adventure: Romans 6:4

---

Sunday, April 9, 2023  
Covenant Church  
Pastor Zack Phillips

## Romans 6:4

**Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.**

### A. Introduction

Apologetics? Exhortation? What do we need to hear *this* Easter?

### B. Certainty

1. The difficulty of uncertainty
2. Can we have certainty?

**John 20:17** Jesus said to her, “Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’”

Belief in the resurrection is what makes the Church more than just the Jesus of Nazareth Society. Because, believing in the resurrection... means that those who relate to Jesus, relate to him as a contemporary, not as a memory, as a reality over against them, not just in their heads and thoughts, are being drawn to stand with Jesus in his present life, the life he now lives to God. —Rowan Williams<sup>1</sup>

Not a false kind of joy that is the result of avoiding life’s discomforts, but rather a joy that knows difficulties and heartbreaks and still survives. A joy that is an assurance that you are doing what you were born to do, an assurance that you are saying yes to the person you are meant to be. A joy that points to the truth of an old Hasidic teaching, that a person is only whole whose heart is broken. —Adam Bucko<sup>2</sup>

**John 11:23-27** 23 Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” 24 Martha said to him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.” 25 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, 26 and

---

<sup>1</sup> Rowan Williams, *The Sign and the Sacrifice: The Meaning of the Cross and Resurrection* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2017): 64.

<sup>2</sup> Adam Bucko, *Let Heartbreak Be Your Guide: Lessons in Engaged Contemplation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2022): 36.

**everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" 27 She said to him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world."**

### C. Adventure

1. Three versions of a common problem

Megan Garber, "We've Lost the Plot," *The Atlantic*, March 2023.

2. The Resurrection as qualitative, not just quantitative, Life

**1 Cor 15:14-19** <sup>14</sup> and if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation has been in vain and your faith has been in vain. <sup>15</sup> We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified of God that he raised Christ—whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. <sup>16</sup> For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised. <sup>17</sup> If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. <sup>18</sup> Then those also who have died in Christ have perished. <sup>19</sup> If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.

So, moving on to the second dimension of good news: the world really can change. If the resurrection is about an all-important, decisive, central moment around which the whole history of the world pivots and turns in a new direction, something has happened within history that has altered what is possible. Someone has made an irreversible breakthrough in the definition of humanity which can never be undone. To believe that the world can change, that God can turn history on its pivot, is to believe that in all sorts of human situations it is possible for things to be different. —Rowan Williams<sup>3</sup>

*Question: What is one thing that God may have said to you through this sermon?*

---

<sup>3</sup> Williams, *The Sign and the Sacrifice*, 78.