



What's so special about Easter?

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Everyday in the world 332 648 people die. That averages as 13 680 deaths per hour and 3.85 deaths every second. In Australia we do a pretty good job at keeping death out of conversation and mind. However there's no denying it is an inevitable and ordinary part of life. Death isn't, in a manner of speaking, anything special. So why do we have a public holiday - an extra long weekend with Good Friday and Easter Monday, in remembrance of one man's death. What has the death of one specific, Jewish man who lived 12,217 kilometres and 2000 years apart from our lives today got to do with us?

Let me tell you the two reasons why thousands of kilometres away and thousands of years later millions of people stop to remember the death of Jesus Christ.

Firstly, Jesus' death wasn't an ordinary death. He did die in a rather common, though brutal, way for first century Roman occupied Jerusalem. Crucifixion was a preferred method of executing non-Roman criminals in Jesus' day. Jesus was just one of 1000s crucified by the Roman government between 4BC and 4AD. However the Bible testifies that, unlike the thousands of others who died on a cross, Jesus' death had a very special divine and eternal purpose. The eyewitness accounts of Jesus, preserved for us today in the Bible, make it clear Jesus was the perfect, sinless, universe creating God-become-human. When he died he was God dying on behalf of us God ignoring sinners. The death of Jesus is the expression of God's sacrificial love for us and the means by which we can be freely forgiven for our rejection of Him. The undeserved death of Jesus is the substitution of our deserved death. The death of Jesus is the act and evidence that we are deeply and

unrelentingly loved by the God who made us. This is worth remembering, celebrating, honouring. This is reason for the whole world to stop.

Secondly, Jesus didn't just die. The eyewitness accounts of Jesus' contemporaries and disciples report the extraordinary event of Jesus coming back to life. This is not something they expected as they huddled together grieving the death of their teacher and loss of hope he would save them. Yet as they met the resurrected Jesus they were convinced Jesus had conquered death and indeed was their saviour - not just in this life but the life to come. They went from fear and despair to people willing to share the miraculous message of who Jesus is and what he has done whatever the cost.

Jesus said: **"I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?"** John 11:25-26

What's so special about Easter? The crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus is the historical proof of the creator God's gritty, agonising, death-defying love for you. Will you accept this love? Will you humble yourself enough to admit you need it? Will you accept His promise of life eternal?

Prayer:

Dear Creator God, I believe Jesus is who he said he was. I believe he is God almighty who died in my place to bring me forgiveness and eternal life. Forgive me for rejecting you. Help me now to live knowing your love and looking forward to eternal life with you. Amen.