

The Life

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Date: 25 January 2026

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[0:00] 1989 was the release of the last chapter of the original Indiana Jones trilogy. Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade, The Crest for the Holy Grail.

! Legend has said that drinking from the Holy Grail, which is a cup that Jesus used in the Last Supper, will provide instant healing, and sustaining use will grant immortality.

Anyway, legends and movie plots aside, Google was reported to be investing a huge sum of money since 2013 to support scientists to discover anti-aging drugs by genetic engineering, which could extend human's life far beyond its natural causes.

Researchers think that it could be possible for humans to live until they are 1,000 years old. The project has many philosophers and ethicists deeply concerned.

There's the prosper of boredom. There's prosper of having too many memories to remember any of them. And adding to that, if you have not worked out your purpose of your life at 70, most likely you still cannot figure it out at 700 years old.

[1:19] There's also an appealing prosper of someone like Trump or Kim Jong-un. But what if we could have life?

Real, enduring life. Life without pain, fear, bondage, failure, and disappointment. That would be different. Since the beginning of 2026, over the last four weeks, we are wrestling with three of the outrageous claims of Jesus.

In John 14, 6, which we read just then, Jesus came to be the way, the truth, and the life. Jesus came to be the life. And in John 10, 10, he says that he came that we might have life and have it to the fullest.

Four things I want to say about Jesus came to be the life. Firstly, why Jesus came to be the life. And secondly, his life challenges our minds.

And then, his life gives us hope. And finally, his life gives us purpose. The Bible declares that God is eternal. God's life has no beginning and has no end.

[2:32] So, Psalms 90, verse 2, written by Moses, help us to see God is always living. Before the mountains were born, or you brought forth the whole world, from everlasting to everlasting, you are God.

God never needs to be made because he always is. In a brief hundred years, this planet will have population of more than 10 billion brand new people.

And all 8.2 billion of us living today will have vanished off the earth. But not God. He will never have a beginning and therefore depends on nothing for his existence.

God does not need air to breathe or food to eat or water to drink. He does not need help with the work he decides to do. God always has, within his own life, everything he needs for being who he is as God.

And for doing all that he chooses to do. Everything in the world needs God, but he does not need anything in the world. God does not have it in him to go out of existence, just as we do not have in us to live forever.

[3:47] We all age and die because it is our present nature. God, however, continues forever unchanged because it is his eternal nature.

So God is self-existent. He has life in himself. And God is also self-sufficient. He has everything he needs for his life in himself.

This is why Jesus claims to be the life in John 14. It is the natural extension of his claim to be this God.

God, Jesus claims to be the life because he is the God who is self-existent and self-sufficient. Last week, we took a glimpse at John 1.

There, John asserted that Jesus is the Son of God, is equal with God, and God's agent in creating all there is. It also says this about Jesus in verse 4 of chapter 1 of John.

[4:48] In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. And a few chapters later, in chapter 5, verse 26, that claim is expanded and clarified.

As the Father has life in himself, so he has granted his Son also to have life in himself. Jesus is the life because he shares in the self-existing life of God.

That is the first reason he came to be the life. And secondly, John's main concern is that this self-existing life of Jesus is light for humanity.

John is interested in Jesus being life and light for the salvation of humanity. Jesus is the source of eternal life. In John chapter 3, Jesus explains his death on the cross in the term of it being salvation and eternal life to all who believe in him.

Jesus is the life because he is, firstly, the God who always existed and from whom all life flows. And secondly, because he is the source of eternal life for those who believe in him.

[6:06] John 11, verse 25, he says, 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. All these claims hang on the resurrection of Jesus. If Jesus did not raise, then he cannot claim to be life.

The Apostle Paul said the same thing. If the resurrection did not happen, then Christianity is useless. So let's jump back to Mark 16 and follow and allow these resurrected life challenges give us hope and change the course of our lives.

The word of challenge for our mind is there in Mark 16, verse 6. Don't be alarmed, he said.

You are looking for Jesus the last year who was crucified. He has risen. He is not here. See the place where they laid him. That is the challenge to our minds.

[7:17] Jesus came back to life after his execution. The Bible says that after Jesus was killed, he came back to life and appeared to his followers. The Bible says that it's why Jesus' followers did not go home.

That's why Christianity exploded to become dominant in the Roman Empire within 200 years and the largest, most widespread of all religious faith on the planet today.

But this is Cheswood in 2026. And most people around us just do not believe it. I got it. So, in challenging our minds, it is important not to be intellectually lazy.

Before we reject the resurrection, some thoughts need to be given to alternative, historically possible explanations. A general trend is that rather than looking into that evidence, what follows is a accusation that the tests like Mark, Matthew, Luke, and John are not reliable.

To justify ignorance, there is a temptation to call the historical document legends. And Mark challenges that too here. Three times in eight verses in Mark 15:40 and 15:47 and 16:1, Mark recorded the name of the eyewitnesses who saw it all.

[8:48] Mary Madeline, Mary the mother of James, and Sonomi. Why three times? Why three times? Because these are the marks of ancient historians to emphasize their findings about the fact, not legends.

These women are clearly described as eyewitnesses. Notice in chapter 15:40, some women were watching.

And again, in 15:47, Mary Madeline and Mary the mother of Joseph saw where he was laid. Then in 16:1, when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away.

Then in verse 5, as they entered the tomb, they saw, then at the end of verse 6, see the place where they laid him. This is pretty obvious that Mark sees this woman as clear eyewitnesses to the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus.

This is a slam-dump proof that the resurrection is history and not legend. One of the strongest early arguments against the truth of Christianity is that the account of the resurrection is based on the eyewitnesses' testimony of women.

[10:10] A second-century Greek philosopher named Caesar was one of the early opponents of Christianity. He wrote that the resurrection was a lie because women were the eyewitnesses, and women were regarded as

hysterical and unreliable.

And people went, good point, sisters. That is a real problem. It was an incredibly convincing argument, because in ancient cultures, women were marginalized, and it was hard to believe in their testimony.

But this is the very culture that Mark was writing in. And if Mark was to make this all up, then he would never have put women in as the only eyewitness to Jesus' empty tomb.

The only way to account for the women being recorded as the first eyewitnesses of Jesus' resurrection is that they were. This cannot be legend.

Mark challenging our minds and worldview here. He has written this as a historical documentation of actual events, events that challenge the way we see the world.

[11:25] At this point, it will be easy to say, okay, this stuff is written as history, but we got the facts a little muddled up. Ancient people were a little gullible about miracles that do not have our modern, developed mind.

We have learned a thing or two in the past 2,000 years. It is easy to assume that they were open to the idea of resurrection where we are not. So let us not be too quick to assume they were ignorant and gullible.

One thing you will notice as you read Mark is that Jesus tells his disciples quite clearly that he will die and rise again on the third day.

It's there in chapter 8, twice in chapter 9, and again in chapter 10. The weird thing is the third day after his death arrives, no one was expecting a resurrection.

The blokes are not around, and the woman have brought spies to an unthorn a dead body. As they wheeled around the trolley past the spies at Woolies, they did not go, oh, spies are on sale.

[12:35] Unfortunately, we will not be needing those this time around. Jesus just borrowed the term for a few days. The disciples were not sitting around breakfast pointing, ah, it's the third day, maybe we ought to go and take a look.

What could it hurt? What's more, those who did go to the tomb, these three women were wondering who was going to open the tomb for them when they got there.

The resurrection took everyone by surprise. The resurrection was as impossible for them to believe as it is for us today. Their thirst for us, as seeing the empty tomb, was not that Jesus had come back to life, but that someone had stolen the body.

A fair assumption back then, because grave robbing was a widespread practice. If you have doubt about the resurrection, so did they. But they let the evidence charge their worldview.

It's normal to question the validity of the resurrection, but if you do, for integrity's sake, then we have to come up with alternative, historically possible reason.

[13:49] Why this little ragtag group explored to all corners of the globe and penetrated vastly different cultures and changed the world over 20 centuries.

If we reject the resurrection, we have to produce an alternative, historically possible explanation, what happened with the body of Christ. The Christians, the Romans, and the Jews all agreed the tomb they laid Jesus' dead was empty after three days.

So what happened with the body? If we reject the resurrection, then we have to produce an alternative, historically possible reason. Why hundreds of people claim to have seen him resurrected?

And why the opponents of Christianity could not produce a body? Why these early Christians, most of whom were covered at his crucifixion, joyfully gave their life to see this message of the resurrection of Jesus spread through the world?

His life challenges our minds, but if we allow his life to challenge our minds, then his life gives us hope. His life is mercy and grace to our hearts.

[15:04] Look at this wonderful word in Mark 16, verse 7. Go, tell his disciples, and Peter, he is going ahead of you into Galilee.

There you will see him just as he told you. To understand what incredible word of grace and hope this is, let's consider what was not said. He did not say to the woman, to the woman, you tell those faithless, backstepping coward that deserted me and denied me that I might see them if they grovel

and they have better grovel.

That, of course, would have been warranted given what they did to him. Instead, Jesus is forgiving them and calling back to himself even before they have repented.

This is a word of mercy and grace, forgiveness and hope. The greatest, the biggest word of grace and hope is simply in the name Peter. Why is it so special?

It's because at the end of chapter 14, Peter does what he promised he would not. He disowned Jesus. He abandoned Jesus. It's a terrible betrayal by Peter.

[16:20] He turned his back on God and ran to save his own skin. So, if the word to the woman is simply go and tell the disciples, Peter may have concluded that it did not apply to him, not after what he has done.

Jesus specifically said to the women through the angel, I have planned for my disciples, even Peter. Peter was the biggest screw-up and he became the biggest of the leaders in the early days of the church.

He screwed up the biggest in repentance the deepest and his grabs of grace the greatest. The good news of Christianity is that salvation is by grace, not by our work, effort, or strength.

Salvation comes to us by the weakness of Jesus Christ dying for us on the cross. Salvation, eternal life, comes to us by Jesus when we admit our inability and weakness and failure when we admit we need a savior.

Jesus is the savior we need. Forgiveness and life are offered to Peter and to us with the resurrection of Jesus. When a criminal completes his jail sentence, they fully, completely, totally satisfy the sentence.

[17:44] When they walk out of prison, the law has no more claim on them. They are free. Jesus Christ came to pay the penalty of our crime against God.

It was a huge penalty. It was a huge sentence as the sentence was death. He who is the source of life, the self-sufficiency in his life, surrendered that life so that we, deserving of death, may have life forever.

He must have satisfied it fully because he walked out alive and free. Death could not hold him down in Jesus. God stamped the pay in full right across history so that no one can miss it.

It's because Jesus has raised from death God come can come to us with a word of grace and offer us life forever, like his forever life.

If we allow this life to change our minds, then this life will give us hope. And then, lastly, this life will give us purpose to our life and we shape the way we live now.

[18:57] The purpose I'm speaking of is captured in the little word go. Go and tell people about the resurrected Jesus. Go and communicate in every way about the resurrected Jesus.

This is why verse 8 is such a shocking way of Mark to end his gospel account. Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb.

They say nothing to anyone because they were afraid. The resurrection is such a great news. how could you not shout it out?

The resurrection is the answer to our deepest longing to live life well forever. That's why the beauty industry is booming. That's why baby boomers wear jeans and we want to be young, fragrant, healthy because those were the days before emotional pain, responsibility, and clarity.

We want to live and live well and one of the reasons it's so hard to suffer is that we think that this physical world is it and when you lose it, you lose the best and most precious things.

[20:09] Resurrection means that this is not it. There's more to come. The resurrection means that God is going to perfectly remake this world and the resurrection changed everything.

This is hope for the wheelchair barns and the people with crippled emotional pain. No religion in the world except biblical faith promises new and perfect mind, heart, and body forever.

Only in the gospel of Jesus Christ do people find so much hope for life. The resurrection of Jesus changes everything. If you know that this is not the only tangible concrete life, who cares what people do to you, the resurrection makes you free from this life enough to be brave, courageous, sacrificial, generous, patient, and joyful.

The resurrection means you can face the worst things in life with joy and hope. According to 1 Corinthians 15, the resurrection means you can give yourself to serving God in this world with purpose and meaning.

Not in vanity, that's what we all want to say about our life, to finish it and say that has all had purpose and meaning. The resurrection also means life forever with joy.

[21:38] Not just a thousand years, Jesus promises eternal joy. The end of the Bible has a goal of all things, God dwelling with people.

No more tears, no more death, or mourning, or crying, or pain. To the thirsty he promised water with her cause from the spring of the water of life.

Jesus came that we might have life and have it to the fullest. Jesus purchased it and offered never adding life to us. Jesus is the only way, the only truth, and the only life.

Have you received what Jesus offers you? What is the hope and purpose for your life? I invite you to take a moment to consider Jesus' challenge to your life and to accept his offer for you to have eternal life.

I will lead us in a prayer after a brief moment. Please repeat the prayer in your heart and speak with me afterward. If you have prayed with me. Lord Jesus Christ, I come to you now.

[23:02] I confess to you my sin in thoughts, words, and actions. I am truly sorry and turned from living without you to ask for your forgiveness.

Thank you that you came from heaven to save me by dying on the cross for me and raising again for eternity. I know that I cannot do anything to earn your forgiveness.

You have done it all at the cross. As best as I understand, I gratefully give my life back to you, asking for your forgiveness and acceptance. Please come fully into my life as I trust you alone to save me.

come in as my Savior to wash away my sin. Come in as my Lord and be in charge of my life. Come in as my friend to be with me always.

Please send your Holy Spirit to live within me and make me a child in your family. Thank you for hearing and answering my prayer. In faith, I place my hope and trust in you, my Savior and Lord.

[24:04] Amen. Amen.