

Superstar?

On Easter Sunday a live broadcast of Jesus Christ Superstar aired on national television. I enjoy musical theater so I tuned into the broadcast. Jesus Christ Superstar was a popular rock opera written in 1970 with music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. If there is a question whether or not this is an accurate title, ask yourself this: would Jesus ever call Himself a superstar? He was humble and always pointed to the Father. The Bible says: *For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me (John 6:38)*. It is true that the production utilizes some biblical events and narration but the story is told from the perspective of Judas, the man who betrayed Him for 30 silver coins. The show actually depicts Judas as a victim. In the show, to Judas Jesus was “just a man.” We know better. Jesus is the Son of God, who lived among us so He would understand our temptations and pain.



While I appreciate the artistic abilities of the actors the show ended before the most important part of the Easter story. The show concludes with Jesus on the cross as it is being raised up toward Heaven. Instead of the eerie darkness described in the Bible as Jesus died, the television screen pans upward and turns a bright white, revealing a lighted cross. Perhaps it implies there is something divine happening but we are left to figure it out ourselves. We know the rest of the story -- the best is yet to come.

What was missing is the Resurrection. Without the Resurrection our faith would be based on a wonderful man who could do miraculous things. Ray Vander Laan said: “Jesus walk to the cross was not a defeat but a great victory.” According to Christian theologian Oswald Chambers, “The cross was not something that happened to Jesus – He came to die; the Cross was His purpose in coming.” Chambers went on to say, “The Cross is not the cross of man but is the Cross of God.” It provided a way for every person to have a right-relationship with God and to be in fellowship with God. Remember the temple curtain that was torn when Jesus died. Previously, only the High Priest could enter the “Holy of Holies” altar in the temple, and just once a year – on the Day of Atonement. We no longer have a barrier between us and God. Our path to God is direct and immediate. We are now reconciled with God because of the sacrificial death of Jesus. Regarding the Cross Chambers said, “It is the gate which any and every individual can enter into oneness with God... The heart of Salvation is the Cross of Christ.”

The Resurrection changed everything. It proved Jesus was the Son of God. It was not an easy concept to grasp. Even though the church today confidently proclaims the resurrection, it took the disciples some time to be convinced. He showed the “Doubting Thomas” of the world His hands and feet as proof that He had risen and He made many appearances to the disciples during His 40 days on earth before ascending to Heaven. Then Jesus told him, *“Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed” (John 20:29)*. Two thousand years later it confirms for us that Jesus lived and died for you and me.

The empty tomb was a sign for the hope that Jesus Christ brought to the world. Jesus rose from the dead, defeating sin once and for all. Don’t let your thinking be short-changed by minimizing the power of the resurrection. It provides for us a path for eternal life. The Bible says: *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead... (1 Peter 1:3)*.

The musical showed Jesus ascending into the light. He did bring light to a dark world. Superstar is a human term attributed to a person who accomplishes much more than expected. The title appropriate for Jesus is: Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

Question: How has the resurrection changed your perspective on how you live your life?

Prayer: Dear Lord. We pray that the resurrection will open our hearts to you. We thank you for the forgiveness of sins so that we might enjoy life everlasting with You. Amen.