

# Jesus Christ Is Risen Today



I have been to a lot of sporting events but I have never felt the emotion and energy of the crowd like it was when the Baylor University women's basketball team won the NCAA National Championship in 2005. This group of girls representing my alma mater fought hard all season long and defeated many difficult teams along the way. Every win was followed by yet another challenge, until they finally reached the ultimate, championship game. This match was unlike any other during the long season; for, this one signaled the end and would not be followed by any other confrontations. When the final horn sounded, they were victorious, giving Baylor fans everywhere reasons to cheer.

Easter celebration is unlike any other because it is a final celebration. Death has been conquered in victory. No more games to play. No rematches or do-overs. Every Easter Sunday, the anthem sounds again – not as a cry of possibility or an enactment of what could have happened. Those gathered in the sanctuary join with those around the world in the victorious shout, “Jesus Christ is risen today.” The defeat of the cross has given way to the triumph of the resurrection. To remember that journey from the cross, to the grave, to the skies, we hold back our “alleluias” during the penitent season of Lent until this holy Lord’s Day. The song of the Church should be most boisterous here. Our team has won! This day is the pinnacle of the gospel message; it is the heart of our faith as believers. Paul strongly states in 1 Corinthians 15:3–4, “For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.” (TNIV). Everything hinges on this truth.

This anthem doesn’t sound as recognition of an historic event, although it did happen at a point in human history. Christ’s resurrection is a daily reality in which the believer lives. This is why it makes perfect sense to sing, “Jesus Christ is risen *today*.” While we know that he ascended centuries ago, the reality of his victory has new power for us today and every day. We do not sing that Jesus Christ *was* risen, but *is* risen. Our praise is as eternal as this truth, “as eternal as his love.” Therefore, the celebration never ceases for the believer, though it may grow to its height on this Day of days.

Maybe you need to be reminded again that Christ is reigning above. Often, Christians live defeated lives – as if Christ is still in the grave. Jesus invites us to live in “resurrection power.” There is great strength for the believer who lives in the reality of our Easter songs. That he rules as King from above means our victory continues to be secured. He is seeing to it.

It might be that the victorious shout, “Jesus Christ is risen today” is more reminder than proclamation. Let its truth sink in. Be reminded that when we sing it we sing to a Savior who is above and within. He has been resurrected and not defeated; he sits at God’s right hand and is not in the grave. You’ll find that this truth will again ignite resurrection power in your life.

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